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THE CONQUEST OF ENGLAND

THE CONQUEST
OF
ENGLAND

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

WITH PORTRAIT AND MAPS

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CHAPTER VII

THE GREAT EALDORMEN

955–988

Political condition of England.

THE true significance of English history during the years that followed the triumph of the house of Ælfred over the Danelaw lies in its internal political development. Foreign affairs are for the time of little import, weighty as their influence had been before, and was again to be. With Eadred's victory the struggle with the Danes seemed to have reached its close. Stray pirate boats still hung off headland and coast; stray wikings still shoved out in spring tide to gather booty. But for nearly half a century to come no pirate fleet landed on the shores of Britain. The storm against which she had battled seemed to have drifted away; and the land passed from the long conflict into a season of external peace. It is in the social and political changes that were

passing over the country during this period and the conflicting tendencies which were at work in producing these changes that we must seek for its real history. Here, as elsewhere, the upgrowth of a feudal aristocracy was going on side by side with a vast development in the power, and still more in the pretensions of the Crown. The same movement which in other lands was breaking up every nation into a mass of loosely-knit states, with nobles at their head who owned little save a nominal allegiance to their king, threatened to break up England itself. What hindered its triumph was the power of the Crown, and it is the story of the struggle of the monarchy with these tendencies to provincial isolation which fills the period between the conquest of the Danelaw and the conquest of England itself by the Norman. It was a struggle which England shared with the rest of the Western world, but its issue here was a peculiar one. In other countries feudalism won an easy victory over the central government. In England alone the monarchy was strong enough to hold it at bay. But if feudalism proved too weak to conquer the monarchy, it was strong enough to paralyze its action. Neither of the two forces could master, but each could weaken the other, and the conflict of the two could disintegrate England as a whole. From the moment when their rivalry broke into actual strife the country lay a prey to disorder within and to insult from without.

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The Monarchy.

The upgrowth of the kingly power had been brought about, as we have seen, by a number of varied influences. It had drawn new strength from the dying out of the other royal stocks leaving the house of Cerdic alone, and from the high character of the kings of Ælfred's line. A long series of victories, the constant sight and recognition of the king as head of the national host, and the religious character with which the leadership in war against a heathen foe invested him, had added to the royal dignity; and new claims to authority had sprung from the gradual up-building of England, and the extent of dominion brought under the king's rule, from the balance of Danish and anti-Danish parties in the realm, and from the king's position as common political centre of the English provinces. Along with the advance thus brought about in the authority of the Crown, there went on a change in the old Teutonic conception of kingship, and an imitation of Imperial claims aided by intercourse with the Imperial court. The solemn coronation of the king, the oath of fidelity, the identification of loyalty with personal troth to the personal king, the doctrine of treason, the haughty claims to a far-reaching supremacy, the vaunting titles assumed in charters, all point to a new conception of royalty. But the royal claims lay still far ahead of the real strength of the Crown. There was a want of administrative machinery in actual connexion with the government, responsible to it,

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drawing its force directly from it, and working automatically in its name even in moments when the royal power was itself weak or wavering. The king's power was still a personal power. He had to be everywhere and to see for himself that everything he willed was done. Resting on feeling, on tradition, on personal character, the Crown was strong under a king who was strong, whose personal action was felt everywhere throughout the realm, whose dread lay on every reeve and ealdorman. But with a weak king the Crown was weak. Ealdormen, provincial witenagemots, local jurisdictions, ceased to move at the royal bidding the moment direct pressure was loosened or removed. Enfeebled as they were, the old provincial jealousies, the old tendency to severance and isolation lingered on and woke afresh when the Crown fell to a nerveless ruler or to a child.

The Ealdormen.

At the moment we have reached the royal power and the national union it embodied had to battle with the impulse given to these tendencies towards national disintegration by the struggle with the northman. We have seen how the spirit of feudalism was aided and furthered by the Danish wars, by the growth of commendation and the decrease of free allodial owners, and by the importance given to the military temper. In the ealdormen themselves the feudal spirit was strengthened by the memories of provincial independence, and by the continued existence of what had once been

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older kingdoms and diverse peoples, as well as by the retention of their popular life in the survival of their old judicial and administrative forms. Popular feeling and feudal tendencies went in fact hand in hand. The new ealdormen created by the later West-Saxon kings had hardly taken their place as mere lieutenants of the national sovereign before they again began to rise into petty kings, and in the century which follows we see Mercian or Northumbrian thegns following a Mercian or Northumbrian ealdorman to the field, though it were against the lord of the land. Even the constitutional forms which sprang from the old English freedom tended to invest these higher nobles with a commanding power. In the "great meeting" of the Witenagemot or Assembly of the Wise lay the rule of the realm, but distance and the hardships of travel made the presence of the lesser thegns as rare as that of the free-men; and the ealdormen became of increasing importance in the national council. The old English democracy had thus all but passed into an oligarchy of the narrowest kind. But powerful as they might be, the English ealdormen never succeeded in becoming really hereditary or independent of the Crown. Kings as weak as Æthelred could drive them into exile and replace them by fresh nominees. If the Witenagemot enabled the great nobles to bring their power to bear directly on the Crown, it preserved at any rate a feeling of national unity, and was ready to

back the Crown against individual revolt. The Church too never became feudalized. The bishop clung to the Crown, and the bishop remained a great social and political power. As local in area as the ealdorman, for the province was his diocese and he sat by the side of the ealdorman in the local Witenagemot, he furnished a standing check on the independence of the great nobles.

Eadwig.

The death of Eadred formed the occasion for an immediate outbreak of political strife. The flight of the thegns from his death-bed was the sign of a court revolution. Eadred had died childless, but his brother Edmund had left two children, Eadwig and Eadgar, and the eldest of these was now called to the throne.[1] Mere boy of fifteen as he was,[2] we find the new king the centre of an opposition party, hostile to the system of Eadred's reign.[3] In its outset the struggle seems to have been one for influence between the kindred of the king, the leading nobles of Wessex,[4]

[1] As he mounted the throne in November, 955, and died in October, 958, Eadwig's reign covers hardly three years.

[2] Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunst." Introd. lxxxviii.

[3] Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunstan," Introduction, lxxxviii. Robertson, "Hist. Essays," 191, conjectures from Dunstan's connection with the East-Anglian house and Eadgifu, as from the combination of "his own disciples" against him at this time, that "he had allied himself with the party in the state opposed to the leading nobility of Wessex, who were the principal characters round the throne during the reigns of Æthelstan and Eadmund."

[4] The Saxon biographer says that most of Eadmund's nobles "lapsed from the path of rectitude," that is, opposed Dunstan and his fellow-rulers.

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and the three who had directed affairs in Eadred's name, his mother Eadgifu, the great ealdorman of East-Anglia, and Abbot Dunstan of Glastonbury. In this struggle the first party proved successful. The charters of the time show that the king's kinsmen, Ælfhere, Ælfheah, and Æthelmær, stand at this time first among his counsellors,[1] while Eadgifu was driven from court, as well as bereft of her property.[2] The Half-King, Ealdorman Æthelstan, however, and Dunstan[3] held their ground[4] at court for a while, in spite of the efforts of Æthelgifu, a woman of high lineage, whose influence over Eadwig had played no slight part in the change of counsellors. Darker tales floated about of Æthelgifu's purpose to wed the boy-king to her daughter, a marriage which from their kinship in blood the religious opinion of the day regarded as incestuous; and when the Witan

[1] The second charter of Eadwig is a grant to Ælfhere as his "kinsman," descended "a carissimis predecessoribus."—Cod. Dip. 437. This was the Mercian ealdorman of later days. The assertion of the twelfth-century biographers of Dunstan that Eadwig banished his kinsmen from court "is contradicted, by every grant and charter of his reign."—Robertson, "Hist. Essays," p. 193.

[2] She says herself, "Eadred died, and Eadgifu was bereft of all her property."—Cod. Dip. 499.

[3] Osbern (sec. 25) accuses Eadwig of from the first changing his counsellors "despectis majoribus natu, puerorum consilia sectabatur," of pillaging rich people and churches — and of plundering and outraging the Queen-mother, Eadgifu. Osbern also says that Dunstan by threats and exhortations opposed all this and the marriage, but finding his efforts vain, withdrew.

[4] Dunstan signs charters till the coronation: Æthelstan still signs at the head of the ealdormen to the close of the year.

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gathered to crown Eadwig, the jealousy of the two parties, as well as the irritation which her influence caused, was seen in a strife at the coronation feast.[1]

The strife of parties.

To realize the import of this strife we must recall the sacred associations that hung round the crowning of a king.[2] It was in itself a solemn office of the Church. It was the primate of the whole English people who called on the people for their "yea" or "nay." The king's vow to govern rightly was given before the altar. He was anointed with holy oil. The crown was set on his head by priestly hands. The prayers of the multitude went up for him to heaven as he was "hallowed to king." With the new sacredness about him, still crowned with the royal crown, still clad in the royal robes that bishops and priests had put upon him, his hair still dripping with the holy oil, the new ruler passed from church to guest-hall, and sate for the first time amidst Witan and people gathered in solemn feast before him as their consecrated head. But the sense of his hallowing fell lightly on Eadwig. Withdrawing on slight pretext from the coronation feast, he delayed his return, till whispers ran through the hall that he had retired to his own

[1] The coronation feast took place on the first or second Sunday after the Epiphany, 956 (Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunstan," Introd. lxxxviii.).

[2] Stubbs, "Const. Hist." i. 170, gives the history of our coronations.

chamber and the society of Æthelgifu.[1] The slight stung nobles and bishops to the quick; and though Archbishop Odo stilled the uproar, the Witan bade Dunstan and Bishop Kynesige of Lichfield bring back the king, willing or unwilling.[2] The envoys found Eadwig between Æthelgifu and her daughter, the crown flung heedlessly at his feet. Hot words passed; and as the boy refused to rise, Dunstan carried out the bidding of the Witan by dragging him with his own hand to the guest-hall and setting him in his kingly seat.[3] The deed was one not likely to be forgiven, either by Eadwig or by Æthelgifu, whom the abbot in his wrath at her resistance had threatened with death; and as the year went on he felt the weight of her hand. Dunstan was driven from the realm by a sentence of outlawry; and men charged to tear out his eyes reached the shore as he put out

[1] Will. Malm. "Vit. Dunst." sec. 26, "Ille quasi ventris desiderio pulsatus, primo in secretum, mox in triclinium fœminarum concessit."

[2] "Volentem vel nolentem," Sax. Biog. sec. 21.

[3] Such seems the simple story of an event on which "much has been written, and an amount of criticism spent altogether out of proportion to the materials for its history." (Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunstan," Introd. lxxxix.) The account given by our earliest authority, the Saxon biographer, and of which all later stories are but exaggerations, attributes indeed the whole outbreak to a monstrous lust of Eadwig for both Æthelgifu and her daughter. We may dismiss this the more easily that its narrator clearly forgets that Eadwig was a mere boy, that the daughter became Eadwig's queen not a year later, and that what remains after dismissing this scandal is quite enough to account for the event. His story, it must be remembered, was written forty years after the occurrence, and here is clearly not derived from Dunstan himself.

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to sea and steered for the coast of Flanders,[1] where Arnulf gave him shelter in the great abbey, just restored by the count's munificence, beside which the town of Ghent was growing up.

The Mercian ealdormanry.

The triumph of the rival party was completed at the close of the year by the withdrawal to a monastery of the "half-king," Æthelstan, whose ealdormanry seems for a time to have been parted between his four sons. But the price of this triumph had to be paid in a new disintegration of the realm. Before the end of the same year, 956, the leader of the king's kin, Ælfhere, was made ealdorman of the Mercians. The revival of the Mercian ealdormanry was a far more significant step than the creation of the ealdormanries that had preceded it; for while they had been but divisions of the Danelaw, this was a parting of that purely English kingdom of the "Angul-Saxons" which Eadward had formed by the union of Wessex and of Mercia, and which had served ever since as the nucleus of the growing realm.[2] And not only was this inner and purely English kingdom broken up, but it was broken into two nearly equal parts. In extent, in popula-

[1] Sax. Biog. sec. 23. The importance of his withdrawal to Ghent is well shown by Stubbs ("Memor. of Dunst." Introd. cxx.). The Saxon biographer calls it "ignotam jam regionem dictu Galliæ, cujus pœne loquelam ritumque ignorabat."

[2] Amidst all the changes of the royal style, the one phrase which the Chancery always falls back upon as really descriptive of the character of the realm which the House of Ælfred had built up is "King of the Angul-Saxons, and of the peoples that lie about them."

tion, in wealth, the Mercian ealdormanry, stretching as it did from Bristol to Manchester and from the Watling Street to Offa's Dyke,[1] was little inferior to the region south of Thames which was left to the king. The court revolution, in fact, had ended in prisoning Eadwig within the limits of a dominion which was hardly larger than the dominion of any one of his own ealdormen,[2] and in leaving him at the mercy of the four great houses who parted all the rest of Britain between them.

How helpless the Crown had become in face of these great houses was shown by the events that followed. The two court parties who had

[1] It was in the main co-extensive with the Mercia of Æthelred and Æthelflæd, save in the valley of the Thames, which may have passed to the East-Saxon ealdormanry.

[2] As to the order of events in 956 we gain no information from chronicle or biographers. The charters however give a few hints which I have used in the text. (1) That for some months of the year Dunstan and Æthelstan remained counsellors at court is shown by their joint signatures to several charters (*e.g.* Cod. Dip. 1191, 1196-7) in which Æthelstan still signs first among the "duces," while Ælfhere still signs as "comes" or "minister." (2) In a smaller group Dunstan's name is no longer found, but Æthelstan still signs at the head of the "duces," and Ælfhere remains "minister" (*e.g.* Cod. Dip. 1198). (3) In a third, Æthelstan still signs first, but Ælfhere signs as "dux," no doubt as Ealdorman of Mercia (Cod. 1179, 1181, 1182, 1183, 1184, 1185, 1186, 1187, 1188, 1189, 1190, 1192, 1193, 1194, 1199, etc.). (4) Æthelstan disappears, and Ælfhere signs as head of the "duces" (*e.g.* Cod. Dip. 1207). (There is a second and inferior "Æthelstan dux," whose signature has gone on side by side with the first, and who signs on into the next year: but he is clearly distinguishable from the East-Anglian ealdorman by the position of his signature.) As the last charters are few, we may suppose that Æthelstan only withdrew from court towards the end of the year.

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triumphed over Dunstan and Æthelstan quarrelled over their victory. They had won the king, but their joint possession was disturbed when Æthelgifu in 957 wedded her daughter Ælfgifu[1] to Eadwig, and the jealousy of the king's kin was shown by their withdrawal from the king's court, as well as by their persuading his younger brother, Eadgar, to join in this withdrawal.[2] For a while Archbishop Odo remained at court, though denouncing the marriage as against Church law; but before the year ended the disregard of his remonstrances forced him also to retire, and his solemn sentence "parted King Eadwig and Ælfgifu, for that they were of kin."[3] The sentence was at once followed by a general revolt. The new ealdorman whom Eadwig had set over Mid-Britain was the first to move against him; for it could but

[1] Cod. Dip. 1201. An exchange of lands is witnessed by "Ælfgifu the king's wife, and Æthelgifu the king's wife's mother," besides three bishops and one ealdorman, Byrhtnoth.

[2] The charters show that Eadgar remained with his brother up to May, 957 (Cod. Dip. 465). We are however far less aided by these documents than in 956, when their number is very large, perhaps from the abundance of coronation grants. In 957 we have but few, and there is little to show to what part of the year they belong. In one group we find Eadgar and the full court as at the close of 956 (Cod. Dip. 463, 465, May 9); in another, though Archbishop Odo and the bishops remain, Eadgar and Ælfhere are both missing (*e.g.* Cod. Dip. 467, 468, where but two "duces" sign, Eadmund and Æthelsige); in a third Odo is added to the number of absentees, there are few bishops, while to the duces, Eadmund and Æthelsige, are added Ælfred, Ælfric, and Ælfsige (Cod. Dip. 1209, 1210).

[3] Eng. Chron. a. 958. Of this separation the Saxon biographer and Adelard say nothing, while Osbern gives another tale.

have been at Ælfhere's bidding that the Mercians rose and chose Eadgar for their king.[1] The ealdormanries of the eastern coast however, with the Five Boroughs and the Northumbrian earldom, must have joined Ælfhere in his revolt, for the whole land north of the Thames soon owned the rule of Eadgar, and only Wessex remained faithful to Eadwig.[2] On the young king's part no resist-

[1] As we have seen, the revolt cannot have been earlier than May, and as Odo remained after Eadgar's withdrawal, probably not earlier than the later months of the year. On the other hand, it "cannot be later than the spring of 958, as in that year Eadgar begins to issue charters as king" (Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunstan," Introd. lxxxix.-xc.). The assertion of Dunstan's biographers that it arose out of Eadwig's attacks on monks is a confusion of this struggle with the struggle after Eadgar's death. Robertson ("Historical Essays," 193) says justly enough, "Eadwig is accused of dissolving the monasteries of Glastonbury and Abingdon, and of banishing the Benedictines from England, yet he was the earliest benefactor of Abingdon, for his grants of Ginge and other lands in 956 are realities, while the charter of Eadred, dated in 955 and witnessed by Oscytel, as archbishop of York, is a forgery. Æthelwold, 'father of the monks,' with Ælfric of Malmesbury and two other abbots, attest his latest charter in 959 ; the clergy as well as the laity of Wessex were his staunchest supporters—Ælfwold, recommended for the see of Crediton by Dunstan, Daniel, and Brithelm of Wells, among the bishops of his party, are claimed by Malmesbury as *alumni* of Glastonbury—and there were no Benedictines at that time in England to drive away. The struggle between secular and regular began in the reign of Eadgar, and was antedated long afterwards to throw odium on Edwy. If Dunstan was among the supporters of Eadgar, Edwy could point to Æthelwold as his follower, for the contest was fought on political grounds, and not about a question of ecclesiastical discipline."

[2] Will. Malmesbury ("Vit. Dunst." lib. 2, sec. 3), says the West-Saxons rose too, but reconciled themselves to Eadwig, perhaps on his abandonment of his wife. Of the northern rising our knowledge is small. It is mentioned in only one chronicle, and then under a wrong year. The Saxon biographer

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ance seems to have been possible; a joint meeting of the Mercian and West-Saxon Witenagemots agreed on the division of the realm; and the Thames was fixed as the boundary between the dominions of the two brothers.[1]

Its end.

The importance of the revolution lay in its revelation of the weakness of the monarchy. At its first clash with the forces it had itself built up, the realm of Eadward and Æthelstan shrank helplessly into its original Wessex. The Danelaw with English Mercia again fronted the West-Saxon

of Dunstan calls it vaguely a rising of the "northern people" ("a Brumali populo relinqueretur"; so Eadgar is chosen king of the "Brumales"), but gives no definition of them. With Osbern, who is the first to give a detailed account of this revolution, it was strictly a rising of the Mercians, "virorum ab Humbre fluvio usque ad Tamesium." (Sec. 28.) Eadwig, he says, was in Mercia when the sudden rising took place. "Coacti in turbam regem cum adulterâ fugitantem atque in inviis sese occultantem armis persequi non desistunt. Et ipsam quidem juxta Claudiam civitatem repertam subnervavere deinde qua morte digna fuerat mulctavere. Porro regem per diversa locorum semestra deviantem ultra flumen Tamisium compulere." (*Ibid.*) Eadgar is then chosen king "super omnes provincias ab Humbre usque ad Tamisium," and war follows for a while. In all this Eadmer follows Osbern. The signatures however of Archbishop Oscytel and of many northern jarls to Eadgar's charter of 959 (Cod. Dip. 480) when Eadgar is "totius Merciæ provinciæ necnon et aliorum gentium in circuitu persistentium gubernator et rector," and which is attested by Dunstan of London and other Mercian bishops, show Northumbria and East-Anglia as taking equal part with Mercia in the revolt. Ælfhere signs first among the ealdormen, followed by Æthelstan and Æthelwold of East-Anglia. Of northern names we see "Oskytel dux," and Sigwulf, Ulfkytel, Rold, Dragmel, Thurferth, and Thurcytel, among the "ministri."

[1] "Sicque, universo populo testante, res regum diffinitione sagacium sejuncta est, ut famosum flumen Tamesis regnum disterminat amborum."—Sax. Biog. sec. 24.

king, as it had fronted him when Guthrum marched to complete the work of the northmen by the reduction of southern Britain; and it was now organized into a single political body, owning the rule of Eadgar, "king," as he called himself, "of the Mercians," or "of the Engle."[1] Eadgar showed his independence by recalling Dunstan from exile, and appointing him in full Witenagemot to the successive sees of Worcester and of London.[2] Eadwig, on the other hand, lay isolated in Wessex, and was driven even there to submit to the forces of revolt. In the spring of 958 Odo ended the strife between the Church and the king by gathering an armed band, riding to the hall where the queen was dwelling, seizing her, and carrying her out of the realm. The blow seems to have been followed by a threat of deposition, and Eadwig at last submitted to the archbishop's sentence.[3] From that moment he remained

[1] In the first of Eadgar's charters of this date (Cod. Dip. 471), one of 958, attested by the bishops of Dorchester, Lichfield, Hereford, Lindsey, and Worcester, he styles himself "Rex Anglorum." In the second, of 959, he is "Rex Merciorum." (Cod. Dip. 480.)

[2] As Dunstan was consecrated by Odo, he must have returned before June, 958.

[3] The life of Oswald, by a Ramsey monk (in Raine, "Hist. Ch. of York," vol. i.), written between 995 and 1005, gives the earliest detailed account of this. "Antistes (Odo) . . . repente cum sociis equum ascendit, et ad villam quâ mulier mansitabat pervenit eamque rapuit et de regno perduxit, regemque dulcibus ammonuit verbis pariterque factis, ut ab impiis actibus custodiret se, ne periret de via justa." This is probably from the information of Oswald, Odo's nephew, and disposes of the later stories of Osbern and Eadmer.

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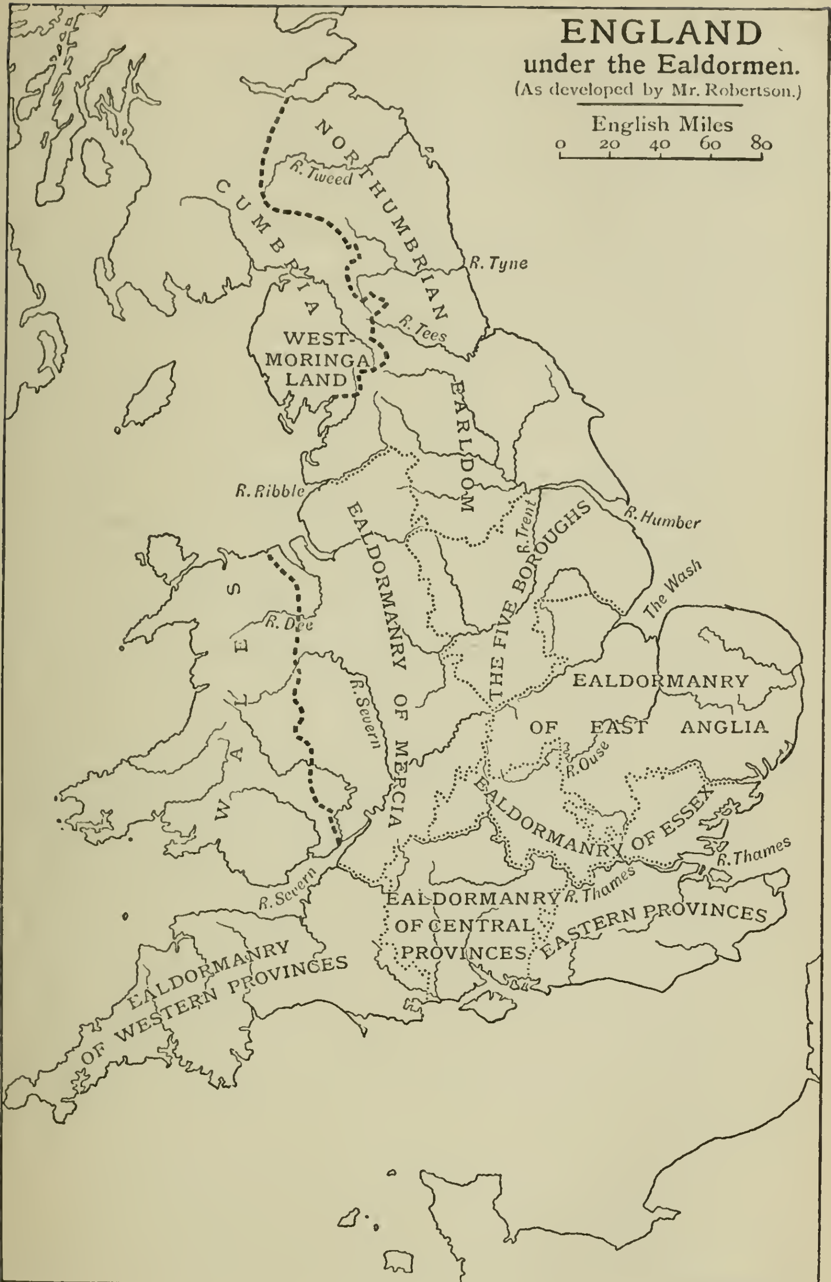
powerless in the hands of Odo and of his grandmother, Eadgifu, who returned to court, where she no doubt again resumed her power,[1] and after the archbishop's death must have acted as sole ruler. In 959 however the death of the boy-king of Wessex put an end to the outer seeming of disunion. The king of Mercia was received as their king by the West-Saxons; and the unity of the monarchy was again restored under the rule of Eadgar.

The West-Saxon ealdormen.

The first measures of the government however showed how utterly it lay in the hands of the great ealdormen of East-Anglia and Mercia, whose co-operation had placed Eadgar on the throne. Their aid had to be paid for; and the payment they chose was the extension of ealdormanries over the last remaining part of Britain, over Wessex itself. From Ecgberht's day at least Wessex had been divided into shires, with an ealdorman and shire-reeve at the head of each; but the natural configuration of the ground, as well as the course of history, had gathered these shires into three great groups: those of the "Central Provinces," or the "shires about Winchester," those of the old Eastern or Kentish kingdom, and those of the Wealhcyn beyond Selwood in the west. These traditional divisions

[1] A charter, attested by Odo and Eadgifu (Cod. Dip. 1224), shows their return to court; and as Odo seems to have died in June, 958 (Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunst." Introd. xcv.), the reconciliation must have been early in the year.


ENGLAND
under the Ealdormen.
(As developed by Mr. Robertson.)
English Miles
0 20 40 60 80
NORTHUMBRIAN
CUMBRIA
R. Tweed
R. Tyne
R. Tees
WEST-MORINGA LAND
EARLDOM
R. Ribble
R. Trent
THE FIVE BOROUGHS
R. Humber
The Wash
EALDORMANRY OF MERCIA
WALES
R. Dee
R. Severn
EALDORMANRY OF EAST ANGLIA
R. Ouse
EALDORMANRY OF ESSEX
R. Thames
EALDORMANRY OF CENTRAL PROVINCES
EASTERN PROVINCES
EALDORMANRY OF WESTERN PROVINCES
Walker & Boutall sc.

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were taken as the basis of a new organization. Ælfhere was now, as he remained throughout the reign,[1] the main power at the young king's court; and immediately on Eadgar's accession to the West-Saxon throne, indeed before the close of the year, the Mercian ealdorman received his reward in the raising of his brother Ælfheah to the ealdormanry of Central Wessex—the ealdormanry—as it is sometimes called—of Southampton; while about 966 the East-Anglian ealdorman, Æthelwine, exacted a like return in the elevation of Ordgar[2] to the ealdormanry of the Wealhcyn. Ordgar and Ælfheah were both of the royal kin, both had stood foremost in the group of nobles about Eadwig;[3] and their rise may have been due not only to the influence of their kinsmen, but to

[1] Throughout the numerous charters of Eadgar's reign the order of signature in the attestations is mainly the same. From beginning to end almost, Ælfhere and his brother Ælfheah sign first: then the ealdormen of the East-Anglian house, Æthelstan and Æthelwold: then Byrhtnoth, perhaps ealdorman of Essex: then the "duces" Eadmund and Æthelmund. In 962 the place of Æthelwold (who dies then) is taken by his brother Æthelwine. In 963 (Cod. Dip. 504) we find the first signature of Oslac as "dux," though the Chronicle places his elevation to the Northumbrian earldom in 966. From 966 we find Ordgar appearing among the duces: perhaps raised as father-in-law of Eadgar, who married in 965 his daughter Ælfthryth (Eng. Chron. a. 965). In 969 Eadwulf and Bryhtferth (who has till now stood at the head of the "ministri") are added to the number of "duces," and in 975 we have a "dux Ælfsige." Ælfheah and Ordgar seem to have died during Eadgar's reign, as their signatures are missing in the later charters.

[2] Ordgar was the father of Ælfthryth, the wife of Æthelwine's brother, Æthelwold, who had died in 962.

[3] Ælfheah signs a charter of Eadwig in 955 (Cod. Dip. 436) Ordgar as late as 957 (Cod. Dip. 479).

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their own desertion of Eadwig's cause. Only the "eastern kingdom" was left without an ealdorman, perhaps from Dunstan's reluctance to set a great noble over Kent, where the primate was supreme.

The Primate and King.

With these earlier measures of the reign Dunstan however can have had little to do; for soon after the first settlement of the realm he became Archbishop of Canterbury,[1] and at once made his way to Rome, where he received his pallium at the hands of Pope John the Twelfth. It was only on his return in 960 that he seems to have taken the main direction of affairs. His policy was that of a cool, cautious churchman, intent not so much on outer aggrandizement as on the practical business of internal government. While withdrawing, save in the harmless arrogance of royal titles, from any effort to enforce the supremacy of Wessex over Welshmen or Cumbrians, and practically abandoning the bulk of England itself to the great nobles, the young king and the primate devoted themselves to the enforcement of order and justice in their own Wessex. In itself this union of archbishop and king in the government of the realm was of no small moment. The Church and the Monarchy were the two national powers which had been raised to a height above all others through the

[1] For the difficulties as to Odo's immediate successor see Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunstan," Introd. xciii. The date of the archbishopric is 959; the entries in some chronicles under 961 being later interpolations. (Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunstan," xcvi.)

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strife with heathendom and the Danes; and from the very outset of the strife in Ecgberht's days they had been drawn together as natural allies. But it was only at the close of the struggle that this natural alliance hardened into something like complete unity. Dunstan would seem to have contemplated the installation of the Archbishop of Canterbury as a constitutional and fixed adviser of the king, in the place of his own West-Saxon prelates: and though this plan was never quite realized, it left no slight mark on our later history. The displacement of the bishop of Winchester by the primate of Southern Britain as the national adviser of the Crown was at any rate a step forward in the process of development which, even while the monarchy was weakening day by day, was showing the growth of a national sentiment. During this reign at least the plan was carried out. The rule of the realm was in the hands at once of Dunstan and Eadgar; and king and primate were almost blended together in the thoughts of Englishmen. So far indeed as their work could be distinguished, there was a curious inversion of parts. The king was seen devoting himself to the task of building up again the Church, of diffusing monasticism, of fashioning his realm in accordance with a religious ideal.[1] On the other hand, the

[1] Hence his praises from the monastic chroniclers of his own and later days. Thus Eng. Chron. (Peterborough), a. 959. "He upreared God's glory wide, and loved God's law. He was wide throughout nations greatly honoured, because he

primate was busy with the task of civil administration; and if he dealt with the Church at all, dealt with it mainly as a political power to be utilized for the support of the monarchy. But in fact it is hardly possible to distinguish between the work of the one and the work of the other. If we read the accounts of the hagiologists, all is done by Dunstan and we see nothing of Eadgar. If we trust to the scanty records of the Chronicle, Dunstan is unheard of, and the glory of the reign is wholly due to Eadgar. The contemporary charters supply the explanation of the seeming inconsistency; they show, so far as their evidence goes, that the work was one; but that its oneness was the result of a common and unbroken action of the primate and the king.

Eadgar.

In the earlier years of Eadgar, however, the action of Dunstan must have been far the weightier of the two, for the king was but a boy of sixteen at his accession. It was not indeed till 966, when he had fully reached manhood, that we can trace the individual action of Eadgar himself in English affairs. The young king was of short stature and slender frame, but active and bold in temper;[1] and the legendary poetry which gathered round his name suggests that as he grew to manhood

honoured God's name earnestly, and God's law pondered oft and frequently, and God's glory reared wide and far, and wisely counselled most oft and ever for God and for the world."

[1] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), vol. i. p. 251, "staturæ et corpulentiæ perexilis."

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there was at least an interval in his reign which saw an outbreak of lawless passion, if not of tyranny. He must have been married at an early age to Æthelflæd the White, who became the mother of a boy, his successor, Eadward the Martyr; for already in 965 her death had left him free to wed another wife, Ælfthryth, the mother of a second son, Æthelred.[1] It is before the latter marriage, in the years when he was only passing into manhood, that we must place the stories which have been saved from the poetry that gathered about his reign, such as that of the violation of a nun at Wilton,[2] stories which are mainly of interest as showing that popular tradition handed down a very different impression of Eadgar from that given by the monastic hagiographers, though they may possibly preserve a true record of the excesses of his youth. But if

[1] The Eng. Chron. (Worc.), a. 965, makes Ælfthryth "daughter of Ordgar the Ealdorman": Will. Malmesbury, "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), vol. i. p. 255, makes Æthelflæd the daughter of an ealdorman, Ordmær.

[2] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), vol. i. p. 252, etc., "primis temporibus fuisse crudelem in cives, libidinosum in virgines." Will. Malm. "Gest. Pontif." (ed. Hamilton), p. 190, represents Cnut as thinking Eadgar "vitiis deditus maximeque libidinis servus in subjectos propior tyranno fuisset." But the "vitiis" seem to be borrowed from the Chronicle, a. 958, "one misdeed he did that he foreign vices loved," which is nothing but the common charge against his policy of union, like "heathen customs within the land he brought too oft, and outlandish men hither drew, and harmful folk allured to this land"; while the "cruelty" may be a popular rendering of the severity of his laws and of such acts as the harrying of Thanet.

this temper ever existed it must have passed away with riper years. Dim as is our knowledge of the king, his progresses, his energy in the work of religious restoration, the civil organization which went on throughout his reign, the traces that remain of his rigorous justice, the union with Dunstan, above all the unbroken peace and order of the land, an order only possible at so early a time when the ruler's hand was felt everywhere throughout the realm, are more than enough to witness his devotion to the task of rule.

The public peace.

As we have said, it is impossible in the main acts of his reign to distinguish between the work of the king and the work of the primate. But it was to Eadgar and not to Dunstan that after tradition attributed the general character of his reign. A chronicler writing at the close of the Norman rule tells us that among Englishmen of his time there was a strong belief that in any fair judgment no English king of that or any other age could be compared with Eadgar.[1] The great characteristic of his rule was the characteristic of peace. At his birth Dunstan was said to have heard the voice of an angel proclaiming peace for England as long as the child should reign and Dunstan should live.[2] The prophecy, if it was

[1] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), vol. i. p. 256. "Merito ergo non infirma inter Anglos fama est nullum, nec ejus, nec superioris ætatis regem in Anglia recto et æquilibri judicio Edgaro comparandum."

[2] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), vol. i. p. 235. "Vul-

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ever uttered, was certainly fulfilled. "He dwelt in peace," says the chronicler, "the while that he lived. God so granted it him."[1] In the centuries before the Danish warfare there had been constant strife either between the English states into which Britain was divided, or between the tribes that made up each separate state. For more than a hundred and fifty years the country had been a scene of fierce and brutal warfare between Englishman and Dane. The history of the new England had in fact been a series of troubles within, and then of troubles without. But with the accession of Eadgar foreign war and internal dissension seemed alike to cease. Within, he "bettered the public peace more than most of the kings who were before him in man's memory."[2] His rule over the dependent realms and ealdormanries was no doubt the more tranquil for the wise limitation of his claims to government or overlordship. "God him so helped that kings and earls gladly to him bowed and were submissive to that he willed, and without war he ruled all that himself would." Such a peace within and without was partly, as we have seen, the result of other men's labours, but in no small part it must have been the result of the wisdom and effort of Eadgar and Dunstan themselves. The chronicles tell us in

gatum est, quod, eo nascente, angelicam vocem Dunstanus exceperit, 'Pax Angliæ quamdiu puer iste regnaverit, et Dunstanus noster vixerit.'"

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 958. [2] *Ibid.*

Outer quiet.

significant words that the king "earned diligently" the peace in which he dwelt.

In his work of peace Eadgar was no doubt favoured by the state of things in the peoples about him. Danger from without lay mostly in the hostility of Scandinavia and of Normandy, or in the attacks of the Ostmen from Ireland. But master as Harald Blaatand was both of Denmark and Norway, and recently as his fleets had appeared in the British Channel, he was drawn from all thought of aggression in England during the whole reign of Eadgar by the stress of a warfare nearer home against Germany and Otto the Great.[1] Normandy again was entering upon a revolution conducive to English interests. Under Richard the Fearless her transformation from a pirate settlement of northmen into a Christian member of the French kingdom and the European commonwealth suddenly took a vigour it had never known before; and this transformation told in favour of peaceful relations with the states about her. The Ostmen, on the other hand, had turned, we know not why, from foes to friends, and a good understanding had been established between them and the English king which lasted till the conquest of the Norman. Though Olaf, Sihtric's son, the old enemy of Æthelstan and Eadmund, reigned throughout Eadgar's days in Dublin, we possess coins of Eadgar's which were minted there, and it

[1] Dahlmann, "Geschichte v. Dännemark," i. 79-83.

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is possible that the Ostmen may have supplied him with the fleet that accompanied his progress through the Irish Channel.[1] Nearer home the English rule over Wales seems to have been quietly relaxed. Under Eadred four Welsh princes had sat in the English Witenagemot;[2] but with the reign of Eadgar their attendance ceases, and though a war in 968[3] may have forced them to renew the payment of tribute, their dependence on the Crown can have been little more than nominal.[4] In the

[1] Robertson, "Histor. Essays," p. 198. In his later years of rule in Northumbria, Olaf, Sihtric's son, seems to have been united to the English kings by their common opposition to the Danish Eric.

[2] Cod. Dip. 433.

[3] Annales Cambriæ, a. 968.

[4] The legends of the twelfth century give a very different colour to these matters. Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 251, says: "Judvalo regi Walensium edictum imposuerit ut sibi quotannis tributum trecentorum luporum pensitaret, quod cum tribus annis fecisset, quarto destitit, nullum se ulterius posse invenire professus." He has before told the story of the rowing on the Dee, which retains however more of its romantic form in the pages of his contemporary, Florence of Worcester, whose patriotic invention is now beginning to come into play. "Cum ingenti classe, septentrionali Britanniâ circumnavigatâ, ad Legionum civitatem appulit, cui subreguli ejus octo, Kynath scilicet rex Scottorum, Malcolm rex Cumbrorum, Maccus plurimarum rex insularum, et alii quinque, Dufnal, Siferth, Huwal, Jacob, Juchil, ut mandarat, occurrerunt, et quod sibi fideles et terrâ et mari cooperatores esse vellent juraverunt. Cum quibus die quâdam scapham ascendit, illisque ad remos locatis, ipse clavum gubernaculi arripiens, eam per cursum fluminis Deæ perite gubernavit, omnique turbâ ducum et procerum simili navigio comitante, a palatio ad monasterium S. Johannis Baptistæ navigavit, ubi factâ oratione eâdem pompâ ad palatium remeavit: quod dum intraret optimatibus fertur dixisse tunc demum quemque suorum successorum se gloriari posse regem Anglorum fore, cum tot regibus sibi obsequentibus potiretur pompâ talium honorum."—Flor. Worc. (ed. Thorpe), i. 142. Historically these legends stand on the same footing as the other romances embedded in Malmesbury.

north the settlement effected by Eadmund still held good, in spite of a raid into which the Scots seem to have been tempted by a last rising of the Danelaw.[1] The bribe of the Cumbrian realm sufficed to secure the Scot king as a fellow-worker with Eadgar as effectively as it had secured him as a fellow-worker with Eadmund, while a fresh bond was added by the cession during this reign of the fortress of Edinburgh with the district around it along the southern shore of the Forth to the Scottish king.[2]

Isolation of the Dane-law.

The Danelaw, the great Northumbrian Earldom which had been formed in Eadred's day under Oswulf and which passed in 966 into the hands of Earl Oslac,[3] as well as the territory of the Five Boroughs, had almost as little connexion with Eadgar as Cumbria or Scotland. Oslac, the Great Earl as he was called,[4] seems to have been nearly independent. We find him seldom sitting in the Witenagemot,[5] while the name of his predecessor, Oswulf, never appears in these great assemblies. The administrative independence of the Earldom indeed was formally recognized by Eadgar himself in the ordinance drawn up at Wilbarstone. The special aim of this ordinance was to create a uniform system of law; "with the English," says the king, "let that stand which I and my witan have added

[1] Pictish Chronicle ad an., in Skene, "Celtic Scot."
[2] Skene, "Celtic Scot." i. 365.
[3] Eng. Chron. (Worc.), a. 966.
[4] Eng. Chron. a. 975.
[5] He signs some half-dozen of Eadgar's charters.

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to the dooms of my forefathers for the behoof of all my people, only let the ordinance be common to all"; but he did not venture to carry the uniformity into Northumbria. "Let secular rights," he says, "stand among the Danes with as good laws as they best may choose."[1] The civil constitution of the Hundred indeed was the one reform that he invited them to share with the rest of England; "and this I desire, that this one doom be common to us all for security and peace among the people." They were just as independent in religious matters; while celibacy in priesthood became the law of the south, the Northumbrian law ran, "If a priest forsake a woman and take another, let him be excommunicated."[2] But severed as it seemed politically from the general body of the English realm, the Danelaw was being drawn more and more into unity with the national life, and under Earl Oslac the fusion of the Danes with the mass of Englishmen among whom they had settled went quietly on.

Eadgar and the Danes.

From the first moment of his settlement in the Danelaw, indeed, the Dane had been passing into an Englishman. The settlers were few; they were scattered among a large population; in tongue, in manner, in institutions there was little to distin-

[1] Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," vol. i. p. 273.

[2] Stubbs however points out that "the few customs which the Danes and the Danelaga specially retained are enumerated by Cnut, and seem to be only nominally at variance with those of their neighbours; while of the exercise of separate legislation there is no evidence." ("Const. Hist." i. 226.)

guish them from the men among whom they dwelt.[1] Moreover their national temper helped on the process of assimilation. Even in France, where difference of language and difference of custom seemed to interpose an impassable barrier between the northman settled in Normandy and his neighbours, he was fast becoming a Frenchman. In England, where no such barriers existed, the assimilation was yet quicker. The two peoples soon became confounded. In a few years a northman in blood was Archbishop of Canterbury, and another northman in blood was Archbishop of York.[2] That this fusion was furthered by the direct efforts of

[1] "Nothing is known of their native institutions at the time of their first inroads; and the differences between the customs of the Danelaga and those of the rest of England which follow the Norse occupation are small in themselves and might almost with equal certainty be ascribed to the distinction between Angle and Saxon" (Stubbs, "Const. Hist." i. 227). "The civilisation which the Danes possessed was probably about equal to that which the Angles had three centuries before; they were still heathens, and of their legal customs we know no more than that they used the universal customs of compurgation, wergild, and other pecuniary compositions for the breach of the peace. Their heathenism they renounced with hardly a struggle, and the rest of their jurisprudence needed only to be translated into English; the 'lah-slit' of the Danes is the 'wite' of the Anglo-Saxon; and in many cases new names rather than new customs date from the Danish occupation; the eorl, the hold, the grith, the tithing, the wapentake perhaps, supersede the old names, but with no perceptible difference of meaning."—*Ibid.* 228.

[2] The Archbishops Odo and Oswald. Raine's "Lives of Arch. of York," vol. i. p. 118. See also the large number of Danish or Norse names, Frena, Frithegist, Thurcytel, etc., which occur in the list of witnesses to a charter of Eadgar to the monastery of Ely.—Hist. Elien. Gale, "Rerum Ang. Script." iii. p. 517. (A. S. G.)

Eadgar is certain, even from the charges which are brought against him on this score. His laws show that he preserved to the conquered Danelaw its local institutions and local usages; but he did more than this. He freely recognized the northern settlers as Englishmen. He employed Danes in the royal service and promoted them to high posts in Church and State.[1] Such a policy had to be wrought out in the face of no slight opposition. Even in the eulogy which the chronicler passes upon Eadgar[2] the English discontent breaks out in censure of this policy of reconciliation. "One misdeed he did all too much that he foreign vices loved, and heathen customs within this land brought too oft, and outlandish men hither drew, and harmful people allured to this land." Echoes of the same discontent meet us in the later gossip of Malmesbury,[3] how "as his fame flew through every mouth, foreigners, Saxons,[4] men of Flanders, even Danes themselves, sailed hither in crowds, and were welcomed by Eadgar, whose arrival brought with it great harm to the men of the land, men who were up to this time without offence in such matters, and inclined in the simplicity of their own

[1] Thus Thored, Gunnar's son, was in 961 "præpositus domus nostræ," and later sent at the head of a royal force into Westmoringaland.—Eng. Chron. (Winchester), a. 966.

[2] Eng. Chron. (Peterborough), a. 959.

[3] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 236.

[4] This may have come from his connexion with the Imperial house. Otto the Great "mira illi munera devexit et cum eo pactum firmissimæ pacis firmavit," says Flor. Worc. (ed. Thorpe), i. 139.

nature rather to hold to their own than to admire foreign matters, but who now learned from the Saxons an uncivilized fierceness of temper, from the Flamands a loose bodily self-indulgence, and from the Danes drunkenness."

The agricultural society.

That the new Danish influence contributed nobler elements than these to the national life was seen a little later in the development which English commerce owed to the new settlers. As yet, however, the main industry of the country was agricultural. The system of culture indeed had changed little, if at all, since the days of the English settlement in Britain.[1] The township still shared the allotments in its "common field," while its herds and flocks browsed on the common pasture. But the changes in the social economy which had been going on during the long period of the Danish wars were producing a corresponding effect on industrial life. Whether from the circumstances of their original formation, or from the prevalence of commendation to a lord for purposes of protection, the bulk of English villages were now "in demesne," that is to say, in the "dominion" or lordship of some thegn, or bishop, or in that of the Crown itself. The free ceorl had

[1] Kemble ("Sax. in Engl." i. 112, and note) thinks that "England at the close of the tenth century had advanced to a high pitch of cultivation," and that "in some districts of England the Saxons may have had more land in cultivation than we ourselves at the beginning of George the Third's reign." The amounts paid for rental and dues seem to show that land was valuable and hard to get.

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all but vanished; he had for the most part died down into a dependant on the thegn; while the possessions of the nobles were widening into vast estates. The private estate of the lord lay in the midst of the common lands; and the bulk of the villagers held the parcels of private land that they too were acquiring by the tenure of service on this estate which was cultivated on the lord's behalf. As coin was scarce and hard to get, while labour was easy to give in its stead, the bulk of such tenants, or "villeins," as they were called, paid a customary rent in labour,[1] and resembled the small Irish farmer who ekes out his living by work on other men's land. But there were a few villeins who simply held their land by a fixed money rent,[2] like a modern farmer; and there were others, the "boors," who seem to have had no land of their own, but worked on the lord's private land like the labourers of to-day. As a rule the villein could not leave his holding; but if he could not leave, so he could not be driven from it as long as his dues were paid; and if custom fixed the labour-rent without his will, it took in

[1] At the same time we note, both in the laws, and in the accounts of rentals, or heriots, a steady growth of money payments. The amount of coin seems to have been steadily increasing; the repeated regulations as to moneyers indicate a growing demand for it; while there was a large supply of the precious metals, especially of gold, in the country in the form of ornaments and utensils. See Lingard, "Anglo-Sax. Church," ii. 441, 442; and for instances of larger payments in coin, *ibid.* i. 443.

[2] The "censuarii" of Domesday.

return no thought of the lord's will in the matter. The colibert or sokeman[1] might even go, if he would, though leaving of course his land behind him to fall into his lord's hands.

Customary dues.

Custom indeed, rather than any rise or fall of the market, ruled the price of labour as well as the rental of land; and in every demesne usage dictated alike the due of lord and of serf. The hay-ward, who watched over the common pasture when inclosed for grass-growing, was paid by a piece of cornland at its side. The wood-ward, who watched the forest, could claim every tree that the wind blew down.[2] The hog-ward, who drove the swine to the "denes" in the woodland, paid his lord fifteen pigs at the slaughter-time, and was himself paid by the increase of the herd. The bee-ward received his dues from the store of honey—a store which before the introduction of sugar was as needful for household purposes as it was indispensable for the brewery.[3] The services rendered for rent were of the most various kinds. To ride in the lord's train, to go at the lord's bidding wherever he might will, to keep "head-ward" over the manor at nightfall, or horse-ward over its common field, to hedge and ditch about the demesne, or to help in the chase and make the

[1] "Rectitudines singularum personarum."—Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 441.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," 437. At the head of the servants, in social rank, stood the smith, next to him the ploughman, after him the oxherd and cowherd, shepherd, goatherd, and swineherd, all in places of trust.

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Labour-rents.

"deer-hedge," were tenures by which the villagers held their lands, as well as by labour on the lord's land one day a week throughout the year, and a month's toil in harvest-tide.[1]

The labour-roll of two manors will best enable us to realize what these services really were. At Hurstbourn, in Ælfred's day, each hide paid forty pence to the lord at autumn-tide, and he received from the manor six church-mittan of ale and three horse-loads of white wheat with two ewes and lambs at Easter. His men had out of their own time to plough three acres of the demesne, and sow them with their own seed, to mow half an acre of the rent-meadow, and split four loads of wood for the rent-hedging. Besides this they were to do any work that might be called for from them in every week save three in the year.[2] At Dyddenham in the Severn valley the lord's men had a less easy life. "At Dyddenham," runs its labour-roll, "the services are very heavy. The geneat must work, on the land and off the land, as he is bidden, and ride and carry, lead load, and drive drove, and do many things besides. The gebur must do his rights: he must plough half an acre for week-work; and himself pay the seed in good condition into the lord's barn for church-shot, at all events from his own barn; towards werbold,[3] forty large trees or one load of rods; or eight

[1] Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," 433.
[2] Kemble, "Sax. in Engl." i. 321.
[3] Construction of weir or place for catching fish. (Kemble.)

geocu build,[1] three ebban close; of field enclosure fifteen rods, or let him ditch fifteen; and let him ditch one rod of burg-enclosure; reap an acre and a half, mow half an acre; work at other works ever according to their nature. Let him pay sixpence after Easter, half a sester of honey at Lammas, six sesters of malt at Martinmas, one clew of good net yarn. In the same land it is customary that he who hath seven swine shall give three, and so forth always the tenth, and nevertheless pay for common of masting if mast there be."[2]

Manor of Cranborne.

In the same way the survey of a single manor will best bring before us the new rural society. That of Cranborne was one of the most extensive in Dorset: it stretched over ten thousand acres, of which nearly six thousand remained woodland, while three thousand furnished a rough common pasturage.[3] The land actually under cultivation was then but some twelve hundred acres of plough-land with twenty of meadow-land, and its population numbered some forty males. The manor was a royal manor: two-fifths of its whole area remained "in demesne," and in the ordinary cultivation of this two ox-teams of eight oxen each and ten serfs were commonly employed. The serfs of

[1] Let him build eight *yokes* in the weir, and close three ebban. What these geocu and ebban are I cannot say. (Kemble.)

[2] Cod. Dip. 461.

[3] Eyton, "Dorset Domesday," 62.

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the demesne were strictly serfs; at Cranborne they formed about a fourth of the whole population, elsewhere through Dorset they numbered from an eighth to a thirtieth. But at harvest-tide and on given days through week and year the lord called for additional service in his demesne from the villeins who held by this labour-tenure the other three-fifths of the estate. Of these eight were villeins, twelve boors, and seven cottars, who seem to have been distinguished from their fellow-villeins simply by their smaller holdings.[1]

Slaves.

Though the villein was not free in a political sense, though he had no share in the general citizenship, and his lord "stood for him" in hundred-moot or shire-moot, he was in a social sense practically as free as the common peasant of to-day. But beneath the serf or villein lay the actual slave,[2] the "theow," who passed in the sale of an estate with its sheep and oxen and swine, and who was bought and sold as freely. "Herein is declared," runs the record of such a sale, "that Ediwic, the widow of Sæwgels, bought Gladu at Colewin for half-a-pound, for the price and the toll; and Ælword the port-gerefa took the toll." The toll on slave-sales formed one of the most lucrative of the market dues. At Lewes the reeve levied a farthing on every sale of an ox, but fourpence on the sale of a man.[3] The position

1 Eyton, "Dorset Domesday," 45 et seq.
2 See "Making of England," i. 216.
3 Sharon Turner, "Hist. Angl.-Sax." iii. 79, 80.

of the slave indeed had been greatly ameliorated by the efforts of the Church. Archbishop Theodore had denied Christian burial to the kidnapper, and prohibited the sale of children by their parents, after the age of seven. Ecgberht of York punished any sale of child or kinsfolk with excommunication. Ine freed any slave whom his lord forced to work on Sundays.[1] The murder of a slave by lord or mistress, though no crime in the eye of the State, became a sin for which penance was due to the Church. The slave was entitled to his two loaves a day, he was exempted from toil on Sundays and holydays: here and there he became attached to the soil and could only be sold with it; sometimes he acquired a plot of ground, and was suffered to purchase his own release.[2] Æthelstan gave the slave-class a new rank in the realm by extending to it the same principles of mutual responsibility for crime which were the basis of order among the free. The Church was far from contenting herself with this gradual elevation; Wilfrid led the way in the work of emancipation

[1] Ine, sec. 3; Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 105.

[2] "Non licet homini a servo tollere pecuniam quam ipse labore suo acquisierit" (Councils, iii. 202). "Thus Edric bought the perpetual freedom of Sægyfa, his daughter, and all her offspring. So, for one pound, Ælfwig the Red purchased his own liberty; and Sæwi Hagg bought out his two sons. Godwin the Pale is also notified to have liberated himself, his wife, and children, for fifteen shillings. Brihtmær bought the perpetual freedom of himself, his wife Ælfgyfu, their children and grandchildren, for two pounds."—Sharon Turner, "Hist. Angl.-Sax." iii. 83.

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by freeing two hundred and fifty serfs whom he found attached to his estate at Selsey. Manumission became frequent in wills, as the clergy taught that such a gift was a boon to the soul of the dead. At the Synod of Chelsea the bishops bound themselves to free at their decease all serfs on their estates who had been reduced to serfdom by want or crime.[1] Usually the slave was set free before the altar or in the church-porch, and the Gospel-book bore written on its margins the record of his emancipation. Sometimes his lord placed him at the spot where four roads met, and bade him go whither he would. In the more solemn form of the law his master took him by the hand in full shire-meeting, showed him open road and door, and gave him the lance and sword of the freeman.

Inland trade.

It was this agricultural society that practically made up the nation. In the tenth century England could hardly claim to be a trading country at all. Its one export was that of slaves, its imports mainly of such goods as an agricultural people could not produce for itself. Its inland towns were mere villages that furnished markets for the sale of produce from the country round; wares from more distant points were few. The most important perhaps was salt, for as there was little winter-fodder for cattle, a large part of them were slain at the end of autumn, and salted meat

[1] Acts of Council of Celchyth, an. 816, cap. x. Stubbs and Haddan, "Councils," vol. iii. p. 583. On "Celchyth," see same vol. pp. 444, 445. (A. S. G.)

formed the bulk of the food till the coming of spring. The salt works of Worcestershire, which had been worked under the Romans, were still busy,[1] while the boundless supply of fuel from the Andredsweald encouraged the making of sea-salt along the coast of Kent.[2] Salt-workers indeed were found along the whole southern shore. Metal wares also may here and there have made their way to market: for we find mention of an iron-mine as still being worked in Kent in the seventh century,[3] and in the ninth there were lead-works in the valley of the Severn.[4] The rest of the trade of the country was in the hands of the chapman or salesman who journeyed from hall to hall. His wares must often have been of the costliest kind. The growth of the noble class in power had been accompanied by a corresponding growth in wealth; and the luxury of their dress and personal ornaments is witnessed by every document of the time. The thegn himself boasted of his gems, of his golden bracelets and rings; his garments were gay with embroidery and lined with costly furs, the rough walls of his house were often hung with silken hangings, wrought with figures or pictures. We hear of tables made of silver and gold, of silver mirrors and candlesticks; while cups and

[1] Cod. Dip. 67, 68.

[2] Ecgberht makes a grant of salt-works here, with a hundred and twenty loads of wood from the weald to feed the fires. Another grant allows waggons to go for six weeks into the king's forest.—Cod. Dip. 234, 288.

[3] Cod. Dip. 30.

[4] *Ibid.* 237.

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basins of the same precious metals were stored in the hoards of the wealthier nobles.[1] To supply these costly goods as well as the meaner wares of lesser folk must have been the work of the chapman, and gave an importance to this class which passed away as the customer learned to seek the trader instead of the trader making his way to the customer,[2] and the chapman died down into the pedlar.

Its difficulties.

It was seldom that the travelling merchant ventured to travel alone. In a law of Ælfred chapmen are bidden to "bring the men whom they take with them to folk-moot, and let it be stated how many of them there are, and let them take such men with them as they may be able afterwards to present for justice at the folk-moot; and when they have need of more men with them on their journey, let them declare it, as often as their need may be, to the king's reeve in presence of the gemot."[3] To move over the country indeed with costly wares was hardly safe at a time when ordinary travellers went in companies for security, and even the clergy on the way to synods were forced to travel together.[4] The highways in fact were infested with robbers, and the outlaw was,

[1] See the numerous instances given by Sharon Turner, "Hist. Angl.-Sax." iii. cap. 5.

[2] The chapman is first mentioned in the laws of Hlothere (Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 33), and in those of Ine (*ibid.* p. 119). "If a chapman traffic up among the people, let him do it before witnesses."

[3] Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 83.

[4] Lingard, "Ang. Sax. Church," i. 107.

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through the legal usages of the day, a frequent trouble on the road. The roads too were often rough and hardly traversable; the repair of ways and bridges, though an obligation binding on every landowner, was so often neglected, that the Church had to aid in the work by laying on her offenders the penance of "building bridges over deep waters and foul ways."[1]

The gleeman.

The safety of travelling was perhaps hardly increased by the presence of other wanderers from hall to hall, who played almost as great a part in the domestic life of the wealthier class as the chapman himself. The visits of the gleeman and the juggler or "tumbler" were welcome breaks in the monotony of the thegn's life. It is hard not to look kindly at the gleeman, for he no doubt did much to preserve the older poetry which even now was ebbing away. When Christianity brought with it not only a new vehicle of writing in the Roman characters, but the habit of writing itself, it dealt a fatal blow at the mass of early poetry which had been handed down by oral tradition. Among the Franks Charles the Great vainly strove to save the old national songs from perishing by ordering them to be written down. In England Ælfred did what he could to save them by teaching them in his court. We see them indeed lingering in men's memories till the time of Dunstan. But the heathen character of the

[1] Lingard, "Ang. Sax. Church," i. 336.

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bulk of them must have hindered their preservation by transfer to writing, and custom hindered it yet more, for men could not believe that songs and annals handed down for ages by memory could be lost for want of memory. And no doubt the memory of the gleeman handed on this precious store of early verse long after the statelier poems of Cadmon or Cynewulf had been set down in writing. But useful as their work may have been, and popular as were both gleeman and tumbler,[1] the character of the class seems to have been low, and that of their stories is marked by the repeated prohibition addressed to the clergy to listen to harpers or music, or permit any jesting or playing in their presence.

Revival of learning.

With learning indeed the stress of war had dealt roughly since the time of Ælfred. The educational effort which he had set on foot had all but ceased, for the clergy had sunk back into worldliness and ignorance; not a book or translation, save the continuation of the English chronicle, had been added to those which Ælfred had left, and the sudden interruption even of the chronicle after Eadward's reign shows the fatal effect which the long war was exerting on literature. Dunstan resumed Ælfred's task, not indeed in the wide and generous spirit of the king, but with the activity of a born administrator. It was the sense that

[1] Eadgar himself speaks of them as "dancing and singing even to the middle of the night."

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the cause of education was the cause of religion itself that inspired Ælfred and Dunstan alike with their zeal for teaching. It was this too that gave its popular and vernacular character to the new literature. In Ælfric, a scholar of Æthelwold's school at Winchester,[1] we see the type of the religious and educational popularizer. He aids the raw teacher with an English grammar of Latin; he helps the unlearned priest by providing for him eighty English homilies in all as a course of teaching for the year; he assists Bishop Wulfsy and Archbishop Wulfstan by furnishing them with pastoral letters to their clergy. His homilies were so greedily read, that his admirers begged from him some English lives of the saints, and the prayer of a friend, Æthelweard,[2] drew him into editing and writing an English version of the Bible, which, omitting such parts as he judged unedifying for the times, he carried on from Genesis to the book of Judges.

Chronicle of Worcester.

It was not only in religious writings that the followers of Dunstan carried on the work of literary revival. The historic impulse which had been given by Ælfred and had promised so great a future for our annals in the days of Eadward had died down under his successors. Of no reigns have we in fact more meagre particulars, so far as

[1] Lingard, "Angl. Sax. Church," ii. 311 et seq.

[2] This Æthelweard was possibly the ealdorman of that name, whose chronicle has been mentioned. See vol. i. p. 57, note 1. (A. S. G.)

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their military and political events are concerned, than of the reigns of Eadmund, Eadred, Eadwig, and Eadgar. The great Chronicle of Worcester seems to have remained suspended during this period, nor do we know of any other record which could have supplied its deficiency. But the intellectual activity of Dunstan's school could hardly fail in the end to fix upon a work so congenial as that of historical composition. To Dunstan himself we owe the life of Eadmund, the martyr-king of East-Anglia, since it was at his suggestion that Abbo, the most notable of the French scholars, was summoned from Fleury, and induced to undertake it. His great assistant, Æthelwold of Winchester, was possibly the author of the last continuation of the Chronicle of Winchester, the meagre and irregular annals from the death of Eadward the Elder to the death of Eadgar, which must have been put together in Eadward the Martyr's reign, and whose defects their author strove to supply by interspersing them with the noble historic songs from Cyneheard's Song Book. Dunstan's other great helper, Oswald, unconscious both of Æthelwold's labours and of the nobler work of the annalist of the time of Eadward the Elder, seems to have taken a copy of the original chronicle of Ælfred to his church at Worcester, where the meagre jottings with which he linked it to the story of his own day became the beginning of a later chronicle which was afterwards to equal

the literary excellence of that of Eadward.[1] The final cessation of Æthelwold's chronicle with the death of Eadgar transferred the centre of English historical literature from the Church of Winchester to that of Worcester; and it was Worcester which retained this historical supremacy till the middle of the twelfth century, from the days of Oswald and Æthelred to those of Henry the First. In no place was the historical tradition and the national sentiment cherished with greater tenacity, and we shall see how at a far later time, in the English revival after the Norman Conquest, this national sentiment passed through the Latin version of the Chronicle by Florence of Worcester, to mould the great school of Latin chroniclers which sprang up with William of Malmesbury. From the death of Eadgar to that of Cnut this

[1] The beginning of consecutive annals in this Chronicle at 991 seems to fix its compilation (after working up the Chronicle of 887) at this date. Oswald died a year later, in 992, so that the work lies with him or his successor Bishop Aldulf (992-1002). Anyhow, the compiler—if the Peterborough Chronicle, as seems probable, accurately represents this Chronicle—knew only the Chronicle of 887 and was ignorant of the Eadwardian annals, the Gesta of Lady Æthelflæd and the continuation of Æthelwold. Consecutive entries do not begin till 991. This Chronicle is the first or lost Chronicle of Worcester, a work which we do not possess in its original form, but which luckily is still preserved to us almost entire in a copy made for Peterborough in the twelfth century—called the Peterborough Chronicle. In this early part, too, it is virtually copied by the extant Worcester Chronicle, first composed about 1016, and of which we have more to say hereafter; while the Chronicle of Florence of Worcester is a Latin translation of it made in the twelfth century with large additions, from whatever source they may be derived.

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Worcester Chronicle is the one glimmering light in the darkness of our history.[1]

The Danish wars had told as hardly on religion as on learning. We have already seen the strife which the Church had long been waging with the customs and traditions of Englishmen and the profound change which Christianity had worked and was still working in the national life. But in the course of the long struggle with the Danes the character of the Church itself had undergone radical modifications. English Christianity had, in its earlier days, been specially monastic. But the Danish strife had proved almost fatal to monasticism. The monasteries had been above all the points of attack; and throughout the Dane-law not a single religious house survived. What is more remarkable is the almost complete disappearance of monastic life in English Mercia, and in Wessex itself. In Wessex indeed the temper of the people seems to have become so averse to it, that when Ælfred first undertook its revival, though he succeeded in drawing women to his nunneries at Hyde and at Shaftesbury, he was forced to send abroad for monks to fill his house at Athelney. Malmesbury indeed and Glastonbury still went on;

[1] This is a most important point in its bearing on any real criticism of the history of this period. Of this one contemporary Chronicle the rest are only copies or versions of a later date; and the additions made to it by Florence of Worcester and writers of his time when uncorroborated by other evidence have no higher authority than any other historical traditions of the twelfth century.

but the latter at least had ceased, if we may judge from Dunstan's story, to preserve the character of a monastery under rule.[1] Its re-establishment under Dunstan's abbacy, and the refounding of Abingdon by Æthelwold, was all that had been done towards the revival of monasticism in the days of Eadred; and in neither case was the revival a complete one.[2] Both seem to have been as yet rather gatherings of clerks and schoolboys than abbeys in the stricter sense.

So great however had been the part which monasticism had played in our early religious history, that statesmen like Ælfred, as we have seen, regarded its restoration as a necessary part of the restoration of religion itself;[3] and this feeling was no doubt quickened by the view of the reformed Benedictinism which beginning at Cluny was now spreading over Flanders and France. The Cluniac reform had already stirred the zeal of English churchmen; Archbishop Odo had sent his nephew Oswald to study it at

[1] Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunstan," Introd. p. lxxxv.

[2] The "Life of Æthelwold" speaks of the "clerici de Glastoniâ" who accompanied him to Abingdon. It was not in fact till Eadgar's reign that one of these, Osgar, was sent to learn the Benedictine rule at Fleury.—Vit. S. Æthelwoldi, App. to "Hist. Abingdon," ed. Stevenson, ii. 258, 259.

[3] "The movement, with all its drawbacks, was justifiable, perhaps absolutely necessary. . . . We cannot doubt that a monastic mission system was necessary for the recovery of middle England from the desolation and darkness which had been brought upon it by the Danes, or that the monastic revival was in those regions both successful and useful." (Stubbs, "Memorials of Dunstan," Introd. xcviii.)

Fleury,[1] and Æthelwold, with a like purpose, sent to the same abbey one of his clerks from Abingdon.[2] It was only in 964 however that the reform penetrated into England itself. As Eadgar's marriage with Ælfthryth took place about this time, a marriage which connected him with the ealdormen of East-Anglia, who afterwards showed themselves earnest in their friendship for monks, it is possible that it was to his new queen's impulse that the king owed the zeal he showed from this moment in the diffusion of monasticism. It was with Eadgar's support that Æthelwold, who had been raised the year before to the see of Winchester, supplanted clerks by monks in his own cathedral church and carried the new Benedictinism over his diocese, as it was with the support of the East-Anglian ealdormen that he turned from thence into East-Anglia, and revived the great abbeys of the Fens. It was significant however of the unpopularity of the movement that no further extension took place till five years later, when Oswald, who had now become bishop of Worcester, introduced monks into his own cathedral city and its neighbourhood, and that Oswald ventured on no further foundations in his vast Mercian diocese, nor on the introduction of monasticism at all into his later arch-diocese of York. Northumbria, indeed, remained without a monastic house to the

[1] Vit. Oswaldi, Raine, "History of Church of York," i. 413.
[2] Vit. Æthelwoldi, Stevenson, "Hist. Abingdon," ii. 259.

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verge of the Norman Conquest. The Church itself gave the movement little countenance. Only two bishops took interest in it, and even Dunstan himself seems to have done little. His assent must have been given to its progress; but though he held the see of Canterbury for some twenty-seven years, he founded no Benedictine house in Kent, nor did he follow Æthelwold or Oswald in the introduction of monks into his church at Canterbury. Clerks indeed remained at Canterbury till the time of Archbishop Ælfric.[1]

The regular and secular clergy.

In spite therefore of the energy of the king, the monastic movement remained a local one. Tradition ascribed to Eadgar the foundation of forty monasteries; and though it would be hard to fill up the list, even if we attribute to him whatever work was done throughout his realm, it is certain that it was to his time that English monasticism looked back in later days as the beginning of its continuous life. But after all his efforts, monasteries were only firmly planted in Wessex and East-Anglia; and there only by the personal efforts of king and ealdormen. In the

[1] Prof. Stubbs ("Memor. of Dunst." Introd. cxix.) shows that Oswald and Æthelwold were the chief actors in the dispossession of the "secular clerks who held monastic property"—that the general mass of the clergy were untouched—that all we know of Dunstan's part in the movement is "that he did not oppose it,"—that he left secular clerks at Canterbury, and that his ecclesiastical legislation contains nothing against clerical marriage. "It is the enforcement of monastic discipline, not the compulsory celibacy of the clergy, that is the object of the clerical reforms: and in this Dunstan only partly sympathized." (Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunstan," Introd. cxix.)

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Mercian ealdormanry there were only a few monasteries about Worcester. In the Northumbrian earldom there were none at all. Such a failure can hardly be attributable to the mere strife over questions of property which these foundations may have brought; it shows a want of zeal for the re-establishment of religious houses in the people at large. The system indeed no longer answered to the religious needs of the country. Even had the stricter rule which the reformers introduced allowed the new Benedictine houses to do the same work which had been carried on by the mission-preachers of the earlier monasteries, they were now not needed for it. Their place had been taken by the parish priest, and the influence of the monastic clergy had been superseded by the parochial organization of the Church. But while the Danish wars had been fatal to the monks—the "regular clergy" as they were called—they had also dealt heavy blows at the "seculars," or parish priests. The long strife had told as hardly on the learning and morals of the priesthood as on their wealth. The injunctions of synod and Witenagemot failed to enforce clerical celibacy. Their failure is written on the very face of the dooms themselves. "Let him who will abstain from concubinage with women," runs a doom of the time, "and preserve his chastity have God's mercy, and be worthy besides for worldly honours of thegn-wer and thegn-right, both in life and in the

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grave; and he who will not do that which is befitting his order, let his work wane before God and before the world."[1] But the loss of social rights seems to have had little effect on the priesthood at large, while in the Danelaw clerical marriage appears to have been legally recognized.

The Bishops.

While it destroyed monasticism and ruined discipline in the lower clergy, the strife with the Danes had greatly raised the importance of the higher. In the war of religion the bishops had come to the front as warriors and as statesmen. In Wessex, at least from the time of Æthelwulf, we see them drawn into State employment, and politically linked with the court. The kings in fact seem to have seized on the episcopate as a force which might hold in check the provincial isolation and the independence of the ealdormen. The check was to some extent an efficient one, for as the ealdorman was the temporal lord of each under-kingdom, so the bishop was its spiritual lord, and in Witenagemot or shire-moot the two sat side by side as equal powers. It was probably with this view that the kings had so lavished wealth on the prelates—gifts and restorations of lands, wide grants of jurisdiction, military and judicial privileges: it was at any rate a distinct result of Dunstan's policy. An important political end was gained when he placed the choice of

[1] Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 307. Laws of Æthelred. Cnut renews this doom.

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bishops in the hands of the Crown, and insured their fidelity by reserving to the Crown a power of deposition. And not only did the bishops thus become Crown nominees, but they were by that fact transferred as it were out of their own world into the political world. With the primacy of Dunstan separate ecclesiastical councils cease,[1] and the bishop's place is henceforth in the Witenagemot or in the royal council. The northern primate Dunstan tied to the southern throne by annexing to the see of York the southern see of Worcester, and this arrangement lasted to the Conquest. The rest of the bishops appear from this time in the light of great secular powers whose wealth and influence were at the disposal of the Crown, and the bulk of whom were among its regular councillors. It is indeed from Dunstan that we may date the beginnings of that political episcopate which remained so marked a feature of English history from this time to the Reformation.

Eadgar's rule.

The great ealdormanries in middle and eastern Britain can have had hardly more connexion with Eadgar's direct government than the earldom of the north. In Mercia, the independence of Ælfhere, the ealdorman or "Heretoga[2] of the Mercians," was probably little hampered by his acknowledgment of Eadgar's nominal supremacy,

[1] Stubbs, "Const. Hist." i. 276.

[2] See grant of Oswald, Cod. Dip. 494, "with leave and witness of Eadgar, King of the Angles, and of Ælfhere, Heretoga of the Mercians."

nor is it likely that the supremacy was less nominal over East-Anglia. What really held Britain together was not the power which the king exercized over the ealdormen, but the power which the ealdormen exercized over the king. Throughout Eadgar's reign, if we look, in the dearth of historic information, to the witness of the charters, Ælfhere and his brother Ælfheah stand at the head of the royal counsellors, and next to them stand the ealdormen of East-Anglia and the ealdorman of Essex.[1] The power of the Crown in fact was in the hands of these great nobles; and the cool judgment of king and primate was shown in their recognition of this fact, and in their abstinence from any useless struggle against it such as wrecked England under Æthelred. They restricted themselves to Wessex, and mainly to the work of furthering public order in Wessex. The laws of Eadgar[2] are brief, and chiefly devoted to the police of the realm, to developing the remedial jurisdiction of the king, securing the regular holding of the courts, organizing the country in its hundreds[3] for the suppres-

[1] For Eadgar's reign our materials are of the scantiest. The chronicle breaks wholly down, and gives some half-dozen meagre entries for the entire reign; the information of Dunstan's biographers all but ceases with Eadgar's accession, and those of Æthelwold or Oswald add little but facts connected with the monastic movement. For the signatures to the charters, see *antea*, p. 17.

[2] Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 258-279.

[3] The "Hundred" first appears by name under Eadgar. Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 259.

sion of crime and maintenance of the peace, and promoting uniformity in measures[1] and in the coinage.[2] The same purpose of order may be seen in the ravaging of Thanet in 968,[3] as a punishment for the practice of wreckage among its inhabitants, and in an extension of the royal progresses which after-tradition associated with the reign of Eadgar. "Every summer," says Malmesbury,[4] "immediately after the close of the Easter Festival," which was kept at Winchester, "Eadgar used to order ships to be gathered together along every shore, since his wont was to voyage with the eastern fleet as far as the western side of the island, and on its return home to proceed with the western fleet as far as the north, and from thence to return with the northern fleet to the eastern coast." The object of this cruise was to sweep the sea of pirates. "In winter and spring," on the other hand, that is when his home progress would least interfere with the culture of the land, "he rode through every shire, inquiring into the law-dooms of the powerful men, and showing himself a severe avenger of any wrong done in the name of justice."

[1] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 237-8, tells how Dunstan ordered pegs to be inserted in all drinking cups that none might drink deep without knowing it.

[2] If we may trust later tradition, Eadgar issued a new coinage in 975, as the old had become so clipped as to have lost its standard weight.—Matt. Paris, "Chron. Maj." a. 975. (A. S. G.)

[3] Eng. Chron. a. 968.

[4] "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 252.

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Death of Eadgar.

We need not accept every detail of this story, but it may be taken as showing the existence of an organized system of judicial and administrative progresses at this time, as well as the continuance of the naval system which had begun under Ælfred. It was indeed with work such as this that Eadgar seems to have been mainly occupied throughout his reign. Of political measures we see hardly a trace. By the union of the sees of Worcester and York under a single prelate, Dunstan probably purposed to get a new hold upon the north; and it may be that a more distinctly political aim is seen in the coronation of Eadgar at Bath in 973,[1] when the two primates united in setting on the head of Eadgar what may have been a distinctively national crown.[2] But if the ceremony was meant as a prelude to any effort for the restoration of the

[1] The fact of this coronation alone is given by the contemporary Chronicle: Oswald's biographer (about A.D. 1000) seems to look on it as one of the common "wearings of the crown," but gives in his verbose way (Vit. Oswaldi, Raine, "Histor. of Ch. of York," i. 437) a full description of the ceremony, with the coronation oath; at the Conquest, Osbern, and Gotselin in his life of S. Edith, connect it with the close of a penance of seven years laid on Eadgar for his violation of a nun. See Stubbs, "Memor. of Dunst." Introd. p. xcix.-ci., who evidently leans to Robertson's opinion ("Hist. Essays," pp. 203-215) that the coronation "was a solemn typical enunciation of the consummation of English unity, an inauguration of the king of all the nations of England, celebrated by the two archbishops, possibly with special instructions or recognition from Rome, possibly in imitation of the imperial consecration of Eadgar's kinsmen, the first and second Otto, possibly as a declaration of the imperial character of the English crown itself." For myself, I cannot think the facts sufficient to support this very tempting theory.

[2] Eng. Chron. a. 973.

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royal power, its purpose was foiled by Eadgar's death only two years after.[1] His death was a signal for the completion of the work of political disintegration. Till now the great ealdormen had contented themselves with detaching their own ealdormanries from the Crown, and limiting its actual rule to Wessex, while they controlled its action by their united influence. But this influence was now to be broken by strife among themselves, and by a rivalry for power over the Crown itself. Eadgar had hardly reached middle age when he died in 975,[2] and the children he had left were both mere boys, for Eadward can scarcely have been more than thirteen, or Æthelred more than seven. The accession of a child-king left the royal power in the hands of any great noble or prelate who could control the court, and the opportunity stirred to life the ambition of the two great ealdormen who divided Mid-Britain between them.

Disputed succession.

Their jealousy of one another had placed the Mercian ealdorman Ælfhere at the head of an anti-monastic party, while Æthelwine of East-Anglia, with his maternal uncle Brihtnoth of Essex, stood at the head of a monastic; and on Eadgar's death Ælfhere immediately restored the seculars to the churches in his ealdormanry from which they had been driven,[3] while Æthelwine

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 975.
[2] He was only thirty-two. See Eng. Chron. a. 973.
[3] *Ibid.* 975.

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gathered an army in East-Anglia to defend the cause of the monks.[1] The monastic question, however, was a mere side issue. The main aim of each of the rivals was to secure the king, and their quarrel at once took the form of a dispute over the succession. Æthelwine, himself the brother of the first husband of Eadgar's queen, supported the claims of her child Æthelred, which were backed by the boy's mother and the whole monastic party. On the other hand, Eadward was as vigorously supported by Ælfhere. Civil war was, in fact, only averted by the resolute action of the minister who still held Wessex in his grasp. The will of Eadgar, which named Eadward as his successor, must have been drawn up under Dunstan's counsel, and the rising of Æthelwine was in fact a rising against Dunstan's influence. His influence, as we shall see, was still dominant with Eadward, while under Æthelred it would have been at once set aside, as it was in fact set aside as soon as his reign began. Dunstan therefore threw himself on the side of Ælfhere, and he was joined by his fellow-primate; for if the monastic party backed Æthelwine, its head, Archbishop Oswald, showed himself greater than his party. The constitutional precedent which Dunstan had set in the coronation at Bath was now resolutely turned to use. As the representatives of northern and southern England the two primates had but

[1] Flor. Worc. (ed. Thorpe), i. 144.

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two years before set the crown of all England on the brow of Eadgar; they now settled the question of the dispute over the succession by setting the crown on the head of Eadward.[1]

Eadward the Martyr.

The reign of the young king however was a short and troubled one, and a famine which immediately followed his accession no doubt increased the troubles.[2] A stormy Witenagemot in 977, at Kirtlington, was followed by a second as stormy meeting at Calne, in 978, where "all the chief Witan fell from an upper chamber save the holy Archbishop Dunstan, who alone supported himself on a beam."[3] The anxiety of the later hagiographers[4] to represent the strife in these meetings as mainly concerned with the monastic question has effectually distorted its real character. What we may dimly see on Dunstan's part is an effort throughout to save the Crown from the domination of the nobles. The opponents of Eadward had professed to base their opposition on fear of

[1] Flor. Worc. (ed. Thorpe), i. 145. Eng. Chron. a. 975.

[2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.* 977, 978.

[4] The biographies of Dunstan, which are almost our sole materials for this time, make the whole history turn on a struggle about the monks, in which Æthelwine is the head of the monastic, and Ælfhere of the anti-monastic party, while Dunstan is represented as persecuted on account of his monastic sympathies. All this however is wholly inconsistent with the attitude of Oswald, who was undoubtedly the leader of the monastic party, and who yet crowns Eadward in the teeth of Æthelwine, and above all with the attitude of Dunstan himself, who throughout Eadward's reign is supported by the anti-monastic Ælfhere and opposed by Æthelwine and the monastic party, while on the accession of Æthelred he is actually driven from power by the latter.

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"the harsh temper with which he was wont to punish the outrages of those of his court;"[1] they dreaded that he would "govern by his own unbridled will,"[2] that he would be, in a word, what they afterwards called Æthelred,—a king "redeless" or uncounselled. In the fear thus expressed lay the germ of the rising contest between the great nobles and the Crown which was to lay England in a few years at the feet of the Danes. We may see, perhaps, the purpose of the primate to assert the supremacy of the king in the banishment of Earl Oslac of Deira,[3] a banishment which enabled Dunstan to unite Deira and Bernicia under Waltheof, a ruler probably of Oswulf's house and so of English blood, as well as an ancestor of notable men. But the banishment is memorable in itself as the first of a series of such measures by which the Crown from this time struck at the growing power of the earls and ealdormen.

Murder of Eadward.

In the actual struggle between the rival parties, Dunstan, it may be gathered, played to some extent the part of mediator, but his tendency as the upholder and minister of Eadward must have swayed him to the side of Ælfhere, whose support of the king continued to the end of his reign; while the party of the East-Anglian ealdormen

[1] Eadmer, "Life of Dunstan," sec. 35. [2] Osbern, sec. 37.

[3] See the poem in English Chron. a. 975, which "seems to connect this step," says Mr. Freeman, "with the predominance of Ælfhere and the anti-monastic party."

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were, as we see from the revolution which followed, opponents of Eadward, and with Eadward of Dunstan.[1] The struggle was, in fact, cut short by the young king's murder.[2] Eadward was slain at Corfe soon after the council of Calne,[3] but of the circumstances of the murder we know nothing with certainty. Of its authors we can have little doubt. The party which had failed to set Æthelred on the throne four years before, now removed from his path the king whom Dunstan had set there. It was they who profited by the blow. Dunstan withdrew powerless to Canterbury after the coronation of Æthelred, who was still but ten years old,[4] and left the realm to the government

[1] It would appear that the monks were less powerful under Eadward than under Eadgar. This and the predominance of the monastic party under Æthelred may perhaps account for Osbern's sneer at Æthelred as "monk rather than warrior."

[2] Eng. Chron. a. 979. According to the later story of William of Malmesbury, Eadward was returning home alone from the chase when his stepmother, Ælfthryth, caused him to be stabbed by a servant while he was drinking from the cup which she had handed to him. In spite of his wound he spurred his horse forward to join his companions, but one foot slipping, he was dragged by the other through the winding paths, till his death was made known to his followers by the tracks of blood.—Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), pp. 258, 259. (A. S. G.)

[3] The great council of 977 at Kirtlington, the second at Calne in 978, were closely followed by the assassination.

[4] See Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (ed. Hardy), i. 257. The crowning was at Kingston. and we still possess the coronation oath that Dunstan exacted. "This writing is copied, letter for letter, from the writing which Archbishop Dunstan delivered to our lord at Kingston on the very day when he was consecrated King, and he forbad him to give any other pledge but this pledge, which he laid upon Christ's altar, as the bishop instructed him: 'In the name of the Holy Trinity, three things

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of the king's mother and her kinsmen, Æthelwine and Brihtnoth. The new rulers made little effort to hide their part in the deed, for Eadward was buried at Wareham without the pomp that befitted a king's burial, and no vengeance was sought for his murder. "His kinsmen," the chronicle says bitterly, "would not avenge him." But the pitifulness which has ever underlain the stern temper of Englishmen awoke at the thought of the murdered youth who lay unavenged in the grave to which he had been hurried. He was counted a martyr, and in the year which followed his death Ealdorman Ælfhere was strengthened by the popular sympathy to show his devotion to the king whose policy he had doubtless directed by fetching Eadward's bones from Wareham and burying them with much worship at Shaftesbury.[1]

Death of Dunstan.

The new burial was followed by a burst of pity which forced even Æthelwine and the court to a show of reverence. "They that would not bow afore to his living body now bow humbly on knees to his dead bones."[2] But foully as it had been won, the power was now in the hands of the two eastern

do I promise to this Christian people, my subjects: first, that I will hold God's Church and all the Christian people of my realm in true peace; second, that I will forbid all rapine and injustice to men of all conditions; third, that I promise and enjoin justice and mercy in all judgments, whereby the just and merciful God may give us all His eternal favour, who liveth and reigneth.'"—Kemble, "Sax. in Eng." ii. 35, 36, note.

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 980. [2] *Ibid.* 979.

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ealdormen, and for a time all went well. During the eleven years from 979 to 990, when the young king reached manhood, there is hardly any internal history to record. Danish and Norwegian pirates indeed appeared at the opening of this period at Southampton, Chester, Cornwall, and Portland, but though their presence shows a loss of that hold on the seas which Eadgar and Dunstan had so jealously maintained, they were probably driven off by the English fleet. The hostility of the ealdormen and their boy-king was directed rather against internal foes, against Dunstan and Ælfhere. That Ælfhere was strong enough to oppose them was shown by his solemn translation of Eadward's bones; but three years later they were freed from all rivalry by his death,[1] for though his son Ælfric followed him as ealdorman of Mercia, his opponents succeeded in driving him into exile in 985, and in putting an end for the time to his ealdordom.[2] The archbishop, who had withdrawn to Canterbury, was roused from his retirement by a quarrel of the king's councillors with the see of Rochester, in which the lands of that bishopric, dependent as it was on the primate's see, were ravaged by the young king's order.[3] Dunstan was still powerful enough to awe the government by a threat of excommunication, but in 988 the last check which his existence had enforced on the ealdormen was removed, and the wild wailing with which the

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 983. [2] *Ibid.* a. 985. [3] *Ibid.* a. 986.

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crowds who filled the streets of Canterbury hailed the archbishop's death showed their prevision of the ills which were to fall on the England that had been wrested by one ill deed from his grasp.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DANISH CONQUEST

988–1016

The social revolution.

We have followed the course of the political and administrative changes which had been brought upon England by the coming of the Danes, and have seen how changes even more important had been brought about in the structure of society; though in the one case as in the other the result of Danish presence was not so much any direct modification of English life, as the furtherance and hastening forward of a process of natural development. It was indeed the break-up of the old social organization that united with the political disintegration of the country to reduce it to the state of weakness which startles us at the close of Eadgar's days,[1] and it is in the

[1] "Towards the closing period of the Anglo-Saxon polity I should imagine that nearly every acre of land in England had become boc-land; and that as a consequence of this the condition of the free-man became depressed, while the estates of the lords increased in number and extent. In this way the ceorlas

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degradation of the class in which its true strength lay, and not in any outer attack, that we must look for the cause of the ruin which now hung over the English realm. From Ælfred's day it had been assumed that no man could exist without a lord, and the "lordless man" became a sort of outlaw in the realm. The free-man, the very base of the older English constitution, died down more and more into the "villein," the man who did suit and service to a master, who followed him to the field, who looked to his court for justice, who rendered days of service in his demesne. Eadgar's reign saw the practical completion of this great social revolution. It went on indeed unequally, and was never wholly complete. Free ceorls remained; and they remained in far larger numbers throughout northern England than in the south. But the bulk of the ceorls had disappeared. The free social organization

or free cultivators gradually vanished, yielding to the ever-growing force of the nobler class, accepting a dependent position upon their boc-land, and standing to right in their courts, instead of their own old county gemótas; while the lords themselves ran riot, dealt with their once free neighbours at their own discretion, and filled the land with civil dissensions which not even the terrors of foreign invasion could still. Nothing can be more clear than that the universal breaking up of society in the time of Æthelred had its source in the ruin of the old free organization of the country. The successes of Swegen and Cnut, and even of William the Norman, had much deeper causes than the mere gain or loss of one or more battles. A nation never falls till 'the citadel of its moral being' has been betrayed and become untenable. Northern invasions will not account for the state of brigandage which Æthelred and his Witan deplore in so many of their laws. The ruin of the free cultivators and the overgrowth of the lords are much more likely causes." (Kemble, "Saxons in England," i. 306, 307.)

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of the earlier English conquerors of Britain was passing into the social organization which we call feudalism; and the very foundations of the old order were broken up in the degradation of the free-man and in the up-growth of the lord with his dependent villeins. The same tendencies drew the lesser thegns around the greater nobles, and these around the provincial ealdormen. And this social revolution necessarily brought a political revolution in its train. The independence and rivalry of the great ealdormen seemed about to wreck completely the unity of the State. Even in the Church the bishop was parted from the clergy, as the clergy itself was reft asunder by the strife of regular with secular. Nothing indeed but a force from without could weld these warring elements again into a nation; but the very weakness which they brought about made the work of such a force easy, and laid England prostrate at the foot of the Dane.

The kingdom of the Danes.

During the years of Æthelwine's rule a new storm had been gathering in the north. At the close of the ninth century the kingdoms of the Danes had felt the same impulse towards national consolidation which had already given birth to Norway; and their union is attributed to Gorm the Old.[1] The physical character of the isles and

[1] Gorm, according to Adam of Bremen, came of the stock of a Norwegian conqueror, Hardegon or Harthacnut; but nothing is known of his previous history, save that he had fought among the Wikings at Haslo in 882.

of the Danish territory on the mainland aided in the rapid developement of a great monarchy;[1] the flat country, penetrated everywhere by arms of the sea, offered few natural obstacles to the carrying out of a single will; and from the first we find in Denmark no hereditary jarls, as in Norway, nor petty chiefs surviving under their overlord, as in Sweden, but the rule of a king whose nobles were mere dependants on his court. Under Gorm therefore the whole strength of the Danes was gathered up in a single hand. We have already seen how great that strength was. While the northmen of Jutland were waging their war with the Empire, and the northmen of Norway mastering the string of isles from Ireland to the Faroes, the Danes, who had grown up in silence round a centre which tradition places at Lethra in Zeeland, came suddenly to the front and struck fiercely to east and to west.[2] In 853 they strove to conquer Courland in the Baltic. In 866 they landed under Inguar on the shores of Britain; and

[1] Dahlmann, "Gesch. von Dännemark," i. 68, 128.

[2] The stories of Othere and Wulfstan, in Ælfred's "Orosius," are the first authentic accounts of this eastern Denmark, a name which the description of Othere restricts to the islands and lands east of the Great Belt, and thus denies as yet to Jutland. Wulfstan too speaks of Denmark as a well-known kingdom with the same bounds. But of its history at this time we know nothing, save from some sagas which tell of a king's seat at Lethra. (Dahlmann, i. 61.) The Frankish chroniclers are busy with their assailants from South Jutland; the English tell of the Danes who reached their shores, but say nothing of their mother-land. Indeed the strength of the latter is only a matter of inference from the vigour of its outer attacks.

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the long and bitter warfare which ended in the establishment of the Danelaw in this island must have absorbed their energies till the struggle at home which set Gorm on the throne at Lethra about the close of the ninth century. Of that struggle or of the king's rule in his new realm we know nothing; but the strength which came of union was soon shown in Gorm's conquest of Jutland, a conquest which opened up for the Danes a fresh field of activity in the south, and affected their fortunes by bringing them in contact with the Germany which had just disengaged itself from the wreck of the Karolingian Empire.

Harald Blue-tooth.

In their attack on the south, however, the Danes were roughly beaten back; for Gorm, pressing in 934 into Friesland, was met by the German forces under Henry the Fowler, and so utterly defeated that he submitted to pay tribute and to take back the mission priests whom he had driven from the land. Gorm's life closed with the blow, and a few years after[1] he rested with his wife Thyra under their two huge mounds, which still survive in the village of Jelling by the town of Weile. But if his son, Harald Blue-tooth, kept peace with his neighbour in the south, it was that he found fields of action as tempting and less dangerous to east and west and north. It marks the range of the Danish activity that in the midst

[1] Gorm is supposed to have died about 936. (Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 72.) Harald Blaatand was born at latest in 910.

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of the tenth century one of Harald's sons was setting up a kingdom in Semland on the Baltic, while another son, Eric, was taken in 949 for king by the Northumbrian Danes of Britain. Eric's rule was a short one, and he fell unaided by his father; though the Danish fleets were now often seen in the British Channel. But it was not to Britain or to the British Danelaw that Harald Blue-tooth's ambition looked. The Danelaw in Frankland, the Normandy which had been carved by Hrolf out of the Karolingian realm, was now pressed hard by its foes, and forced to appeal for aid to the mightiest power of the north. In his earliest years we find Harald settled by William Longsword as an ally in the Cotentin;[1] in 944 he was again called to save Normandy from Otto the Great; and about 963 he once more came to Duke Richard's aid. At this moment he was at the height of his power, for two years before the divisions of the northmen and his own unscrupulous guile had opened a new field for Danish greed, and enabled him to establish an overlordship over Norway;[2] and with his triumph over Otto he at last disclosed the ambitious hopes that had drawn him so often to Norman soil. Harald looked upon Normandy as a starting-point for a fresh attack of the northmen on Frankland, and called on the young duke to march at his side. But he

[1] Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 74.

[2] For date, see Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 78.

found a sudden bar to his project in the political instinct of the Normans themselves. Hate them as the Franks might, it was to the Franks that their new religion and civilization irresistibly drew them; and their refusal for ever closed to the Danes all hope of a dominion in Gaul.

Harald and Swein.

Though foiled in the west, Harald was still a mighty power in Scandinavia itself; and even before this overthrow of his Norman hopes he had renewed his father's attack on the south, where Otto the Great had planted the Saxon duchy as a barrier at his very door. Harald was tempted by the Emperor's long absence in Italy to trouble this Saxon land; but on Otto's return in 965 he overran South Jutland, drove Harald to his ships, and forced him again to pay tribute and to submit to baptism.[1] A fresh absence of Otto led to a renewal of the war in 967, and in 974 it broke out yet more fiercely on the Emperor's death; but though Harald brought to the field his new subjects from Norway under Jarl Hakon, a decisive victory of the Germans again forced him to peace. His defeats shook his power; Norway seems to have slipped from his grasp; and his later years at home were spent in warfare with his rebel son, Swein. Swein's story carries us at once into the full tide of northern romance; we are told that he was the child of a slave mother, who served in the

[1] For date, see Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 81, note.

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house of Palnatoki, a noble of Fünen,[1] where alone the boy found refuge from his father's hate. Here too Swein learned to cling to the old gods of his people, and thus furnished a centre for the growing disaffection of the eastern parts of the kingdom, where heathendom still held its own. Since his last fight with Otto Harald had resolutely embraced Christianity; he had forsaken the old heathen sanctuary of Lethra to build a castle and church for himself at Roeskilde hard by,[2] and his home in his later years seems to have been the Christianized Jutland. Thence "he sent a message over all the kingdom that all people should be baptized and follow the true faith; and he himself followed the message, and used power and violence when nothing else would do."[3] But his efforts roused a bitter resistance. It was on the shore of Jutland, ran the legend, that Harald saw a great stone, and longing to set it up on his mother's mound, harnessed to it not horses but men. Then as he watched it move he asked of one who stood by, "Hast thou ever seen such a load moved by hands of men?" "Yes," said the stranger, "for I come from a place where thy son Swein is drawing all Denmark to him. See now which is the greater load!"

Harald strove to meet the danger by driving

[1] This seems disproved by Otto's having him baptized with Harald, as heir of the kingdom.

[2] Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 83.

[3] Saga of Olaf Tryggvason, Laing, "Sea-kings," i. 426.

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Swein from the land; but his warriors forsook him, and in a final battle about 986 he was so sorely wounded, it is said by an arrow from Palnatoki's hand, that he fled from his realm to the eastern sea, and died at Jomsborg, a stronghold at the mouth of the Oder, which he had won for himself in the days gone by, and from which he had maintained his mastery of the Baltic.[1] Jomsborg, if we may trust its story,[2] soon became the great difficulty of Harald's successor. While Swein [3] was opening his reign with the restoration of heathendom and a persecution of the Christian preachers, Palnatoki and the fiercer of the heathen Danes resolved to find a secure refuge from the new religion and the civilization it brought with it, sailed to the Baltic, seized Jomsborg, and founded there a state to which no man might belong save on proof of courage, where no woman might enter within the walls, and where all booty was in common. It may have been that Palnatoki fled thither because his deadly arrow, though it set Swein on the throne, raised inevitably the blood-feud between him and the young king: but in any

[1] See the story in the "Encomium Emmæ," Langebek, ii. 474. Olaf Tryggvason's Saga (Laing, "Sea-kings," i. 403) makes the strife begin in Swein's demand of half the kingdom.

[2] For the worth of the Jomsviking Saga, see Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 87, 88, note.

[3] Suan, Sweno, Suen (later written "Swend," but never pronounced so), Adam of Bremen's "Svein," and the English "Swegen" (where the "g" is soft like a "y"), are all different ways of spelling the same sound. See Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 88, note.

Swein and the Jomsborgers.

case the conversion of Jomsborg from a base of Danish power in the Baltic into an independent state was sufficient to call Swein to its attack.

Ill luck however beset him: twice, it is said, he was taken by the Jomsborgers and freed for gold;[1] but peace was at last brought about, and a saga[2] tells us how Swein's guile and ambition mingled in the burial-feast for his father Harald. "King Swein made a great feast to which he invited all the chiefs in his dominions, for he willed to give the succession-feast or heirship-ale after his father Harald. A little time before Strut Harald had died in Scania, and Vesete in Bornholm, father to Bue the Thick and to Sigurd. So King Swein sent word to the Jomsborg Wikings that Earl Sigwald, and Bue, and their brothers, should come to him, and drink the funeral-ale for their father in the same feast the king was giving. The Jomsborg Wikings came to the feast with their bravest men, eleven ships of them from Wendland, and twenty ships from Scania. Great was the multitude of people assembled. The first day of the feast, before King Swein went up into his father's high seat, he drank the bowl

[1] The contemporary evidence of Thietmar of Merseburg shows that he was at least once "taken by the Northmen"; and that the charge of slave-blood was one of his great difficulties. Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 89, note. The Jomsborg Saga, followed by that of Olaf Tryggvason, makes the price of his release a marriage with the Wendish King Burislaf's daughter, Gunhild, who became the mother of Cnut.

[2] Laing, "Sea-kings of Norway," i. 404.

to his father's memory, and made the solemn vow that before three winters were passed he would go over with his army to England, and either kill King Æthelred or drive him out of the country. This heirship-bowl all who were at the feast drank. Thereafter for the chiefs of the Jomsborg Wikings was filled and drunk the largest horn to be found, and of the strongest drink. When that bowl was emptied all men drank Christ's health, and again the fullest measure and the strongest drink were handed to the Jomsborg Wikings. The third bowl was to the memory of St. Michael, which was drunk by all. Thereafter Earl Sigwald emptied a remembrance-bowl to his father's honour, and made the solemn vow that before three winters came to an end he would go to Norway, and either kill Jarl Hakon or drive him out of the country." Whether Hakon slew the Jomsborgers or the Jomsborgers Hakon, Swein had a foe the less; and the vow of Jarl Sigwald cleared the way for the carrying out of the vow of the Danish king himself.

Swein the Wiking.

The vow however was to be long in fulfilment; for hardly had the Jomsborgers steered to their doom in the north, when Eric of Sweden, whose throne had been threatened both by Harald and Swein, seized the moment of exhaustion to break Denmark's power in the Eastern Sea. Allying himself with the Poles and their duke, Mieczyslav, his success was even greater than his aim, for after

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fierce sea-fighting he succeeded in driving Swein not only from the Baltic but from Denmark itself; so complete indeed was Swein's overthrow, that fourteen years had to pass before he could return to the land. He fell back on the Wiking life of his earlier youth; and after a fruitless effort to wrest Norway from Jarl Hakon, who now ruled there in his own name, he steered for the Irish Channel. It was a time when the seas were again thronged with northern freebooters. The union of the kingdoms, the stern rule of Harald and Jarl Hakon, the wars of the Danes with Norway, and of Sweden with the Danes, above all the strife of religions, had roused afresh the spirit of adventure and wandering. The rovers who had been absorbed for a while by Harald's enterprizes in Frankland and Saxon-land found no work in northern waters during the peace that followed Swein's expulsion; and Wiking fleets, as of old, appeared off the English coasts. Swein himself had probably taken part, as a youth, in the piratical attacks which troubled the coasts of Wessex and Kent from 980 to 982; and though these were interrupted, it may be by the strife between Harald and Swein, the renewal of the raids in 988[1] might have warned England of the danger that was gathering in the north. Three years later indeed, in 991, came the first burst of the storm.[2] A body of Norwegian Wikings landed

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 988. [2] *Ibid.* 991.

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on the eastern coasts, and after plundering Ipswich marched southward upon Essex.[1] At Maldon it met the ealdorman Brihtnoth, who had hastened to save the town. For a while the tide parted the hosts, but as it fell the pirates plunged through the ford, and threw themselves on the shield-wall of the Englishmen. The wall was at last broken; the war-band of Brihtnoth was slain around its lord; and the broken fragments of his force bore off his body from the field.

Æthelred.

The defeat presaged ill for the resistance which England under its ealdormen was to offer to the Dane.[2] But whatever strength the great ealdormanries might have possessed for the conflict was

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 991.

[2] The materials for the history of this time are very scanty. As to the chronicles, we really have only one—that of Worcester—which is preserved to us in the later compilation made at Peterborough. Fortunately this chronicle is full and vigorous throughout, and in some places, as in 1007, it is clearly the work of a contemporary. It was not till 1043 that Abingdon borrowed a copy of this and used it as a base for the chronicle then being compiled at Abingdon, which till 1043 differs little from the Worcester account. This chronicle, with the charters and laws, are the only authorities of contemporary and primary value as yet. Two hundred years later came the twelfth-century translators and compilers, Florence of Worcester, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, differing much in temper from one another, but equally removed in time from the events they narrate, and equally swayed by the patriotic revival of their day. It is true of all—as Mr. Freeman says of the two last—that though they occasionally supply additional details, "it is dangerous to trust them except when they show signs of following authorities which are now lost" ("Norm. Conq." i. 258, note). Beyond these materials we have only the northern sagas, which are yet later and more fabulous; nor is there any contemporary Norman authority till we reach the "Encomium Emmæ."

broken at this moment by the king. Æthelred had now reached manhood; he was indeed already father of two boys, the younger of whom was to be known as Eadmund Ironside. He was handsome and pleasant of address, and though he was taunted by his opponents with having the temper of a monk rather than of a warrior, there were none who denied his capacity or activity.[1] But behind, and absorbing all, was a haughty pride in his own kingship. The imperial titles which had been but sparsely used by his predecessors are employed profusely in his charters; nor was his faith in these lofty pretensions ever shaken even at the time of his greatest misfortunes. His attitude was thus one of stubborn opposition throughout his reign to the efforts of the great ealdormen to control the Crown; it was in fact his revolt from this control, and his persistence in setting aside the rede or counsel in which it embodied itself, that earned him the title of "Unrædig," or the counsel-lacking king, which a later blunder changed into the title of the Unready. Unready, shiftless, without resource, Æthelred never was. His difficulties, indeed, sprang in no small degree from the quickness and ingenuity with which he met one danger by measures that created another.

[1] William of Malmesbury ("Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 268) "wonders, Cur homo ut a majoribus nos accepimus neque multum fatuus neque nimis ignavus in tam tristi pallore tot calamitatum vitam consumpserit." The cause he sees for this is, "Ducum defectionem ex superbia regis prodeuntem," and this statement is no doubt mainly true.

A man of expedients rather than wisdom, he devised administrative and financial plans which, though they were to serve as moulds for our later policy, he had himself neither the strength nor the patience to carry out to any profitable issue. He was capable of brave fighting, when driven hard. But impulsive, fitful in temper, changeful and ready to fling away the fruits of one course of policy by sudden transition to another, he was filled with a restless energy which never ceased to dash itself against the forces round it. He sought safety in skilful negotiations with the foreigner when it was only to be attained by a firm and consistent government at home. It was with the same quick but shallow cleverness that he seized this moment of national peril to open his real reign by a blow at the great houses that had till now held him down.[1]

[1] The charters enable us to follow the course of the great ealdormen under Eadward the Martyr. Ælfhere of Mercia, Æthelwine of East-Anglia, and Brihtnoth of Essex still sign first as before: but Æthelmær becomes "dux," and in 981 an "Eadwine dux" is added. We know from the chronicle in 982 that Æthelmær was ealdorman in Hampshire (*i.e.* of the "Wentanienses provinciæ") and Eadwine in Sussex. Both these died in 982; but Æthelweard, who had been a minister under Eadgar, and was also made dux by Eadward (Cod. Dip. 611), that is, Ealdorman of the Western Provinces (cf. Cod. Dip. 698), was destined to larger and higher fortunes. In a charter assigned to 983, but which if so must be early in that year, we find two new names, Thored and Ælfric, among the duces (Cod. Dip. 636); Ælfric having taken the place of the dead Æthelmær as "dux Wentaniensium Provinciarum" (cf. Cod. Dip. 698 and 642). We see however another Ælfric signing among the "ministri" who must have been son of the

His policy.

The death of Brihtnoth, with that of Æthelwine in the following year,[1] no sooner left Æthelred's hands free than change followed change. The Northumbrian earldom was made less formidable by its division between Ælfhelm and Waltheof, the one earl of Deira, the other of Bernicia, to whose older stock he belonged.[2] The Mercian ealdormen had ceased with the exile of Ælfric in 985, and in this year at latest the king set about breaking up this vast power by creating an ealdorman of the Hwiccas in Leofwine.[3] Æthelred next secured the dependence of Essex by the appointment of Leofsige as its ealdorman.[4] Leofsige, as the king himself tells us, was a new

great Ealdorman of the Mercians, for on Ælfhere's death in the same year, 983, his name disappears from the charters, and we find two Ælfrics signing as duces, one no doubt the Ealdorman of Central-Wessex, the other Ælfhere's successor in his ealdormanry. Æthelwine however succeeds to Ælfhere's position at the head of the duces; while the Mercian Ælfric signs after all but Thored (Cod. Dip. 1279). Both Ælfrics still sign in 984; but in 985 one of them disappears from the charters (Cod. Dip. 1283), and the chronicle tells us that the Mercian ealdorman was banished in that year. Ælfric of Hampshire, on the other hand, goes on signing with Æthelwine, Brihtnoth, and Æthelweard through the next four years; and when Brihtnoth dies in 991 and Æthelwine in 992, we find the two West-Saxon ealdormen, Æthelweard and Æfric, signing at the head of the duces in 994 (Cod. Dip. 687). With them are Leofwine, Ealdorman of the Hwiccas, Leofsige, Ealdorman of the "East-Saxons" (Cod. Dip. 698), and Ælfhelm "of the Northumbrian provinces," with a certain Northman.

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 992.

[2] They first sign in 994.—Cod. Dip. 687.

[3] His first signature is in 994.—Cod. Dip. 687. For his ealdormanry see Cod. Dip. 698.

[4] Leofsige signs as "dux Orientalium Saxonum."—Cod. Dip. 698.

thegn of the royal court, who owed his elevation to the royal favour.[1] Æthelred's attitude was naturally one of standing opposition to the great ealdormen who had overawed the Crown, and Leofsige was the first of the new series of royal favourites, of ministers trained in the royal court, through whom the king sought to counteract the pressure of the great nobles. The favourites whom he chose indeed, so far as we can trace them, seem by their ability to have justified the king's choice. It was, no doubt, under Æthelred's own guidance that Leofsige, with the West-Saxon ealdormen, Æthelweard and Ælfric, took from this time the main part in the conduct of affairs. But the revolution had only helped to shatter what force remained of national resistance, and the first act of these counsellors shows their sense of the weakness of the realm.

Outer difficulties.

Many of the difficulties which Æthelred had to face were not of his own making. The long minority, the rule of Æthelwine, had fatally weakened his cause before he really stood out as king. It must have been during these years that Eadgar's fleet disappeared—and it was the loss of the rule of the seas which told so hardly against England afterwards. Not only was a storm gathering in the east, but dangers were thickening to the south and to the west. The descents of

[1] "Quem de satrapis nomine tuli ad celsioris apicem dignitatis dignum duxi promoveri ducem constituendo."—Cod. Dip. 719.

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Danish marauders and fleets ought to have warned England to gird itself to meet a far greater peril; they were but advance-guards, but signs of the new restlessness which was gathering hosts such as England had never seen for the expedition under Swein and Olaf three years later. To the southward lay the land of the Normans, now to play a part in English history which was never to cease till the Norman duke was hailed as English king. Westward a new power was growing up in Wales. Utterly unable to unite into a permanent state, the Welsh drew together from time to time under chieftains who won a brief supremacy; and in these years of peace Meredydd the son of Owen had succeeded in making himself master of nearly the whole of what is now called Wales. Silently the clouds drew together. In the very year of the victory of the Norwegians in East-Anglia, Meredydd was not only at war with the English but had formed an alliance with the northmen; and that this union was a real danger we see from the treaty of subsidy which was now negotiated with the enemy by the king's counsellors.[1]

The two treaties.

Already indeed their hope lay less in any resistance on the part of England itself than in the divisions of its foes. The Norwegian force

[1] The treaty of subsidy was negotiated by Archbishop Sigeric, and the ealdormen, Æthelweard of the Western Provinces and Ælfric of Central Wessex. See Thorpe's "Anc. Laws and Institutes," i. 284.

which had slain Brihtnoth was still on English soil, but instead of attacking it the king's advisers found a sum equal to a fourth of the annual revenues of the Crown, ten thousand pounds, to buy off its hostility. The treaty was not one of withdrawal; it was a buying of frith. The Norwegians swore to help Æthelred against any foes who might attack England; neither party was to receive the enemies of the other.[1] The other provisions of the peace are inconsistent with any notion of the fleet sailing away. It may in fact have been the policy of Sigeric and the two ealdormen to hold the Norwegian force to aid against Swein's expected descent, a policy of division which was continued by Bishop Ælfheah of Winchester when the descent actually came three years later. Their next step was to detach Normandy from their Scandinavian assailants. Trouble had for some time been growing up between the Norman and the English courts, perhaps owing to the aid given by Normans to the earlier predatory descents on the English coasts, and if we trust the one account we have of these transactions, war was only averted by the mediation of the Pope. However this may be, an English embassy appeared at Rouen and concluded a treaty with Duke Richard, the first recorded diplomatic transaction between the two powers, on

[1] "And that neither they nor we harbour the other's Wealh, nor the other's thief, nor the other's foe."—Thorpe's "Anc. Laws and Institutes," i. 289.

Outbreak of war.

terms that neither Æthelred nor the duke should receive the other's foes.[1]

Had the two treaties been backed by energetic measures of resistance within the realm itself, they would have rendered the enterprize which Swein was now plotting an all but hopeless one; for with the Norman ports closed against him, and the Norwegian host hanging on his flank, the Danish king could hardly have faced a united England. But it was just this national union that every day made more impossible. The pirate force still clung to the English coast; and in 992 Æthelred gathered a fleet at London of ships furnished by that city and East-Anglia, while the fyrd, drawn probably mainly from Hampshire and the surrounding shires, was intrusted to the leading of Ealdorman Ælfric of Central Wessex and Earl Thored. The joint force was to "betrap" the Norwegians; the fyrd, as we may suppose, holding them in play on land till the fleet had cut off their retreat by sea. The plan however was foiled by the English leader. Ælfric had

[1] This Norman "frith" rests wholly on the authority of William of Malmesbury, "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 270. Mr. Freeman accepts it as true. This treaty implies that both sides had already received the foes of the other. The northmen were doubtless the foes of Æthelred, but who were Richard's? It is possible that Dunstan's connexion with Flanders, and his policy of drawing England closer to it, a step which so greatly influenced the after relations of England, was meant by him as a provision against Normandy, and so was understood by the Norman dukes. The treaties with the Norwegians and with Normandy were no doubt accompanied by some arrangement with Wales.

now been ealdorman for nearly ten years, and since the deaths of Brihtnoth and Æthelwine he had stood second in rank and importance only to his fellow West-Saxon ealdorman, Æthelweard; nor does the story of the chronicle give any grounds for his sudden desertion.[1] It may be that he felt Æthelred's plans to be fatal to his order, or that he distrusted the king's personal hostility, for his flight unaccompanied by his followers looks rather like an act of sudden panic than of deliberate treachery; but whatever were

[1] It is possible that the danger by which Wessex alone was immediately threatened developed what may have been a purely West-Saxon policy of subsidizing the Norwegian fleet, a policy which was represented by the three rulers of Southern Britain, the Archbishop, Ælfric, and Æthelweard. Their course of action had been formally accepted by the nation in the treaty of the preceding year; but may we not see in the plan now proposed for the destruction of the Norwegians the triumph of a party in the king's council hostile to the policy of the southern ealdormen, and to any alliance with the enemy? The betrayal of the Norwegians seems to have been in fact a distinct breach of treaty on the part of England, an attempted act of treachery such as was carried out ten years later on St. Brice's Day, possibly by the advice of the same party among the Witan. Under these circumstances Ælfric's conduct may have another explanation than that of deliberate treason. His province was in the utmost danger; he had been responsible for the policy hitherto pursued; and the sense of the peril of so rash and false a course as that now adopted may have urged him to give warning to the Norwegians so as to avert the catastrophe. This explanation of his conduct would seem to agree with the after-course of the story, with Ælfric's later return to the first place among the ealdormen, with the fact that his place in Hampshire does not seem to have been filled up during his absence, and that Bishop Ælfheah of Winchester apparently acted instead of him two years later in face of the threatened attack of 994, and carried out in union with Ealdorman Æthelweard exactly the same policy (A. S. G.).

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the causes of his action, on the night before the execution of the joint scheme he stole to the pirates' camp, and his warning enabled them to escape after an engagement with the English fleet.[1] Ælfric's ship was captured in the fight, but the ealdorman may have escaped and accompanied the northmen when, in 993, their fleet sailed along the coast, ravaged at the mouth of the Humber, and sacked Bamborough, as Æthelred chose this moment for ordering his son Ælfgar to be blinded, it may be in punishment for his father's treason.[2]

Norwegian and Dane.

The Norwegian fleet however was only the advance-guard of the greater host which was gathering in the Irish Channel. The Wikings mustered not only round Swein but round Olaf Tryggvason, a claimant to the throne of Norway, though driven as yet like Swein himself to find a kingdom on the seas. Olaf had been long in the western waters; his saga makes him harry the coasts of Scotland, fight in Man and the Hebrides, and plunder along either coast of the Irish Channel[3] before his junction with Swein; and

[1] Eng. Chron. (Abingdon), a. 992. [2] *Ibid.* 993.

[3] Laing, "Sea Kings," i. 396-398. According to the Saga, "When Olaf left the west, intending to sail to England, he came to the Scilly Isles lying westward from England in the Ocean. . . . While he lay in the Scilly Isles he heard of a seer or fortune-teller on the islands who could tell beforehand things not yet done." Having tried this man's skill, "Olaf perceived he was a true fortune-teller, and had the gift of prophecy. He went once more to the hermit and asked how he came to have such wisdom. The hermit replied that

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their joint force must have drawn to it all the rovers of the seas.[1] The preparations for this alliance and joint enterprize must have occupied a considerable time, and it is no doubt in the anticipation of this great blow that we must find the secret of English policy in the years which preceded its actual delivery, and especially the secret of the treaty of subsidy which was concluded by Ælfric and Sigeric with the Norman duke. In September, 994, King Olaf and King Swein, with a joint fleet of nearly a hundred ships, entered the Thames unopposed. It was significant of the new station which London was from this time to occupy in our history that their first anchorage on Lady-day was off its walls; and that though they at once attacked the city, they were beaten back by the stout fighting of the burghers and forced at last to sail away, harrying, burning, and man-slaying along the southern coast.[2] At Southampton they found at last an entry into the

the Christian's God Himself let him know all that he desired; and he brought before Olaf many great proofs of the power of the Almighty. Olaf agreed to let himself be baptized, and he and all his followers were baptized forthwith. He remained here a long time, took the true faith, and got with him priests and other learned men." (A. S. G.)

[1] The sense of danger was no doubt quickened by a consciousness of intrigue at home, for there were certainly English invitations addressed to Swein. See Cod. Dip. 704, where Ætheric, an East-Saxon, is charged with having promised to support Swein on his arrival.

[2] Eng. Chron. a. 994. "They there bore more harm and evil than they ever bethought them any burgh-men should do."

land, and taking horse there, the host rode for a while without opposition till their progress was checked by the appearance of Æthelred with an army at Andover. It seemed as if the fortune of England was to be settled by the sword: but the policy of the young king and of his advisers, Bishop Ælfheah of Winchester and Ealdorman Æthelweard[1] of western Wessex, was one of diplomacy rather than of arms. Their secret hope was still to break the storm by dividing northman from northman, and with this view a truce was arranged by which the army of the two kings, on payment of sixteen thousand pounds of gold, and a promise of supplies from all Wessex, took up its winter quarters at Southampton. Æthelred's hopes were realized, however, rather by his good luck than by his diplomacy; for during the winter's rest news came from Norway of the growing unpopularity of Jarl Hakon, and of the cry of its people for a king of Harald Fairhair's stock.[2] Olaf became eager to end his work in England and to set sail for the north. It was therefore with little difficulty that Bishop Ælfheah and Ealdorman Æthelweard, aided by the difference of religion between the two kings—for Olaf was now a Christian and Swein a heathen—managed to break their league, and to bring the Norwegian

[1] Æthelweard always signs first among the duces after Æthelwine's death. See Cod. Dip. 698.

[2] Olaf Tryggvason's Saga, Laing, "Sea Kings," i. 418.

leader to an interview with Æthelred at Andover.[1] In return for the king's gifts Olaf pledged himself to withdraw from England and return to it no more, and his retreat in the summer of 995 forced Swein also to withdraw.

Weakness of the English defence.

The two years that followed this withdrawal were spent in a quiet which might have been used to build up an efficient system of national defence.[2] But nothing was done. The king's power indeed must have been shaken by the last year's events, for we not only find Ælfric again in England, but replaced in his old dignity as ealdorman of the Central Provinces, and even in his second place among the

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 994.

[2] In the present period William of Malmesbury and Florence of Worcester have given the tone to the general accounts of modern writers. Both have done much to confuse the annals of the time, especially Florence. His work as far as 994 seems to be a literal rendering of the first Worcester (or Peterborough) Chronicle (though probably taken from the copy preserved in a second Worcester Chronicle as we may see from the entry at 1004), with occasional ecclesiastical insertions from a Ramsey Chronicle and other sources, and the usual rhetorical amplifications of the time. After this point various noteworthy insertions occur in his work which are without foundation in, or even in opposition to, the statements of the Chronicle, and especially in the account of Eadric from 1006 onwards. A poor translator of the Chronicle, he seems to have been a violent partizan, whose patriotism led him to account for every English defeat by a theory of betrayal. The story as the Chronicle gives it is one which is reasonable, if hard to follow from want of detail; but as the insertions of Florence have moulded it, the treason of the ealdormen accounts for every national defeat, and Æthelred is responsible for the slackness of the national resistance. As we have tried to show, however, the causes which underlay the great crash were not the individual action of this or that man, the treason of an ealdorman, or the weakness of a king, but must be sought in the social and political conditions of the time.

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royal counsellors.[1] We know nothing of the circumstances of his return; but the fact itself shows that the royal power after its short outburst of vigour was again ebbing before the force of the great nobles. Its weakness told on the state of the realm. In 997, a band of pirates,[2] who may have been Ostmen from Ireland, appeared in the mouths of the Severn and the Tamar, harried Cornwall without opposition, and, advancing eastward the year after, carried their raids over Dorset, and finally took up their winter quarters in the Isle of Wight, where they levied supplies from the coasts of Hampshire and Sussex.[3] In 999 they pushed still further on, entered the Medway, attacked Rochester, and harried West Kent.[4] Whatever may have been the cause of Æthelred's inactivity before, this daring attack at last aroused both king and Witan. Danger threatened again on every hand; from Norman and from Ostmen, with wikings from Man, and northmen from Cumberland. Ship-fyrd and land-fyrd were summoned, but delay followed delay, and the pirates were suffered to withdraw unharmed to the Norman harbours.[5] The absence of any attempt

[1] He signs again as usual from 994. See Cod. Dip. 687, 688, 1289, etc.

[2] Eng. Chron. a. 997.

[3] Eng. Chron. 998. "And forces were often gathered against them, but as soon as they should have joined battle, then there was ever, through some cause, flight begun, and in the end they ever had the victory."

[4] Eng. Chron. a. 999.

[5] *Ibid.* 1000.

three years before to meet Swein's force at sea may be accounted for by the fact that the English vessels were too small to face the huge warships which were now employed by the Scandinavian kings; the failure to meet these pirates[1] shows that the naval system which had been built up by Ælfred had now been suffered to break utterly down. Æthelred's action at this moment suggests such a failure of the fleet. As if aware of the weakness of his own naval forces he now took into his service a force of Danes, with Pallig,[2] a brother-in-law of Swein, among them, and used this to clear the seas. The first point at which the king struck was Cumberland; the district had only just become mainly Norse in blood, but its position on the western coast made it perilous to the realm, and it had no doubt given aid to the Ostmen who had been harrying in the Channel. After descents on the Isle of Man and on Cumberland,[3] Æthelred again turned southward to follow the freebooters to their refuge across the Channel. If we may trust the Norman chroniclers, the king's descent on the coast of the Cotentin was roughly repulsed, and it may have been the discouragement

[1] "When the ships were ready, then the crew delayed from day to day, and distressed the poor people that lay in the ships."—Eng. Chron. a. 999.

[2] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (ed. Hardy), i. 289.

[3] Eng. Chron. a. 1000. The Norse settlement of Cumberland was such a source of danger in itself, as much probably to Malcolm of Scots as to Æthelred, that I see no reason to prefer the story in Fordun, iv. 34, to that in Henry of Huntingdon, a. 1000 (Arnold), p. 170.

Death of Olaf.

of this failure which drove him anew to abandon warfare for his old field of diplomacy.

The danger from the north, indeed, had now become a yet more pressing one. At the death of the Swedish king, Eric, Swein's fortunes had at last seen a change, for Denmark threw off the Swedish yoke and recalled its king.[1] Swein, indeed, had still to war with Eric's son, Olaf, till the mediation of Olaf's mother, whom he wedded, brought peace with Sweden, and enabled him to renew his father's effort to establish a supremacy over Norway. So great was the power of Olaf Tryggvason, that it was only in league with the Swedes and Jarl Hakon's son Eric, that Swein ventured to attack him; but ill luck threw the Norwegian king, with but a few vessels, into the midst of the enemy's fleet as it lurked among the islands off his coast. The fight in which he fell was long famous in the north.[2] "King Olaf stood on the Serpent's quarter-deck, high above the rest. He had a gilded shield and a helm inlaid with gold; over his armour he wore a short red coat, and was easy to be distinguished from other men. When King Olaf saw that the scattered forces of the enemy gathered themselves under the banners of their ships, he asked, 'Who is the chief of the force right over against us?' He

[1] About A.D. 1000. Dahlmann, "Gesch. v. Dännemark," i. 92.

[2] Probably A.D. 1000. Corp. Poet. Bor. (G. Vigfusson and F. York Powell), ii. 86. See the account of Olaf's building up of a Christian Empire of the north. (A. S. G.)

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was answered that it was King Swein with the Danish host. The king replied, 'We are not afraid of these soft Danes, for there is no bravery in them. But who are they to the right?' He was told King Olaf with the Swedes. 'Better for the Swedes,' he said, 'to be sitting at home killing their sacrifices than venturing under our weapons from the Long Serpent! But whose are the big ships to larboard?' 'That is Earl Eric Hakonson,' said they. 'Ah,' said the king, 'he, methinks, has good ground for meeting us, and we may look for sharp fighting with his men, for they are northmen like ourselves.'" It was, indeed, Earl Eric's men that pressed Olaf hardest in the fight that followed; and at last earl's ship and king's ship lay side by side. "So thick flew spears and arrows into the Serpent that the men's shields could scarce contain them, for the Serpent was girt in on all sides by our ships." Though Olaf's men fell fast, "Einar Tambarskelver, one of the sharpest of bow-shooters, stood yet by the mast and shot with his bow." But, as he drew his bow, an arrow from Eric's ship hit it in the midst and the bow was broken. "'What is that?' cried King Olaf, 'that broke with such a noise?' 'Norway, king, from thy hands!' cried Einar. 'No, not quite so much as that,' said Olaf; 'take my bow and shoot!' and he tossed the bow to him. Einar took the bow and drew it over the arrow's head. 'Too weak, too weak,' he said, 'for the bow of a

mighty king!' and throwing down the bow he took sword and shield, and fought valiantly."[1] The fight, however, was all but over; so few were the fighters that Eric could board the Serpent; the little group about the king were slain; and Olaf himself, throwing his shield over his head, leaped desperately into the sea.

The Norman marriage.

Master by this victory of the north, Swein's hands were free for his long-planned attack on England; and in 1002 it was clear that such an attack was impending. To deprive the Danish king of Norman aid and to close the Norman harbours against him was an obvious measure of precaution;[2] but as yet England had failed in securing the neutrality of Normandy either by treaties or by force of arms. Æthelred now resolved to bind Normandy to him by a personal bond, and in the Lent of 1002, Duke Richard's daughter Emma crossed to the shores of England as its king's wife. The step which the king took was one of the highest moment. In it Æthelred broke away from the traditional policy of his house, which from Æthelstan downwards had aimed at crushing or curbing the northmen of the Channel, by a measure which could not but link their fortunes with the fortunes of England itself.

[1] Laing, "Sea Kings of Norway," i. 475.

[2] "The Jarls of Rouen reckoned themselves of kin to the chiefs in Norway, and held them in such respect that they were always the greatest friends of the northmen; and every northman found a friendly country in Normandy, if he needed it."—St. Olaf's Saga, Laing, "Sea Kings," ii. 16.

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But Normandy was now a wholly different power from the pirate state which had roused jealous fear in Eadward or Æthelstan. The century which had passed since the settlement of the northmen along the Seine had seen the steady growth of the duchy in extent and in power. Much of this was due to the ability of its rulers, to the vigour and wisdom with which Hrolf forced order and justice on the new community, as well as to the political tact with which both Hrolf and William Longsword clung to the Karolings in their strife with the dukes of Paris. But still more was owing to the steadiness with which both these rulers remained faithful to the Christianity which had been imposed on the northmen as a condition of their settlement, and to the firm resolve with which they trampled down the temper and traditions which their people had brought from their Scandinavian homeland, and welcomed the language and civilization which came in the wake of their neighbours' religion.

Difficulties of the Norman dukes.

The difficulties that met the dukes were indeed enormous. Turn to France as they might, it was long before France would turn to them. It disbelieved in their religious earnestness, it credited wild stories about Hrolf's sacrifices on his death-bed, about the apostasy of William and his boy. It disbelieved in their craving for admission into the body of French nationality and French civilization—it called the Normans "pirates," and their

chief the "pirates' duke." The very sovereigns whom they supported looked on them as intruders to be guarded against, and to be thrust out of the land if it were possible. They were girt in by hostile states, they were threatened at sea by England, under Æthelstan a network of alliances menaced them with ruin. Once a French army occupied Rouen, and a French king held the pirates' land at his will; once the German lances were seen from the walls of their capital. Nor were their difficulties within less than those without. The subject population which had been trodden under foot by the northern settlers was seething with discontent. The policy of Christianization and civilization broke the Normans themselves into two parties. A great portion of the people clung to their old religion and their old tongue; and this body was continually reinforced by fresh incomers from the north or from the English Dane-law, and strengthened by those connexions with its heathen brethren in the Channel which were forced on the duchy by the French attacks. The very conquests of Hrolf and his successor, the Bessin, the Cotentin, had to be settled and held by the newcomers, who made them strongholds of heathendom. The strength of this party of resistance was seen in a revolt which shook the throne of William Longsword, in the concession it forced from him that his child should be reared in the Bessin, in the pagan reaction which followed his

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death and gave a pretext for the invasion of Lewis From-over-sea, as well as in the stubborn resistance to change which must have gone on throughout the reign of the two dukes who followed William, ere it broke out for the last time in the revolt of Val-ès-dunes.

Their French policy.

But amidst difficulties from within and from without the dukes held firm to their course, and their stubborn will had its reward. In spite of reinforcement from their pirate-brethren, the balance of strength went more and more against the men who clung to the northern customs and the northern tongue. By the end of William Longsword's days all Normandy, save the newly settled districts of the west, was Christian, and spoke French. So too in spite of the hatred and leagues of his neighbours, the Norman never loosed his grip from the land he had won. Attack indeed only widened its bounds, and added to the older duchy the broad lands of the Bessin and Cotentin. The work of the statesman at last completed the work of the sword. As the connexion of the dukes with the Karoling kings had given them the land, and helped them for fifty years to hold it against the House of Paris, so in the downfall of the Karolings the sudden and adroit change of front which bound the Norman rulers to the House of Paris in its successful struggle for the Crown secured the land for ever to the northmen. The close connexion which France was forced to

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maintain with the state whose support held the new royal line on its throne told both on kingdom and duchy. The French dread of the "pirates" died gradually away, while French influence spread yet more rapidly over a people which clung so closely to the French crown.

Its results.

It was thus that the social and religious change which was in full play at the death of William Longsword took a new strength and vigour through the days of his successor, Duke Richard the Fearless, whose long reign stretched over more than half a century, from 943 to 996. It opened, indeed, with a storm of reaction, the terrible strife which all but laid the duchy at the feet of Lewis From-over-sea. But the storm soon died down into a profound repose. Without, all danger passed away. France, under its new rulers, was friendly. The England of Eadgar was no longer anxious about Norman aid to the Danelaw. The Breton was overmastered. The Fleming held his hand. And within the duchy itself the Normans had learned the danger of civil strife. So tranquil was the land that hardly an event is recorded on the other side the Channel for the thirty years that cover the reigns of Eadred, Eadgar, and Eadward the martyr. In this long stillness the fusion of conquerors and conquered, the Christianization and civilization of the Norman, his assimilation in political and social temper to the France beside him, went

steadily on. If the free institutions of the north had passed to Norman soil their very memory was now lost. Save for a dim tradition of "the Laws of Hrolf," the power of the duke was henceforth unchecked by legal bounds; and the northern sense of equality faded away as the duchy drifted towards the feudalism of the countries around it. A baronage sprang from the friends or children of the dukes, whose houses were to stamp their names on our later history. The kinsmen of Richard's wife, Gunnor, became heads of great families which played their part on both French and English soil. From her brother Herfast sprang the house of Fitz-Osbern; from her children came the counts of Eu and of Brionne, as well as the counts of Mortain. The lords of Belesme, the Montgomeries, the Beaumonts, rose into power on the Norman border-land, while within it Giffards and Tancarvilles, Warrennes, and Mowbrays, and Mortimers, came to the front in the tranquil years during which Richard the Fearless transformed the pirate's land into a feudal Normandy.

The English connexion.

The reign of Richard the Good stretched like that of his father over a long tract of years, from 996 to 1026; but they were still for the most part years of tranquillity. Within the duchy, indeed, a fierce outbreak of the peasantry against the growing feudalism had to be trodden out in blood; but that done all was peace, and the

process of civilization and Christianization went steadily on. People and duke, indeed, showed the same temper, the same daring and passionate courage, the same craft, cunning, wariness, secrecy, patience, the same steady industry and shrewdness in business, which before many years were over was to make them the best diplomatists, fighters, lawyers and builders of their day. Without, Richard looked on at the revolutions of the France across his borders with little interference, save the giving a general support to the king at Paris. But in spite of this seeming inaction, it was the reign of Richard the Good that saw the most momentous event in the whole history of Normandy. The keen eye of Æthelred detected the change which had come over the temper of the duchy, and saw the possibility of detaching it from the Scandinavian attack by an alliance with its dukes. His descent on the coast of Normandy the year before may indeed have quickened Duke Richard the Good's wish for the alliance which Æthelred was now to propose to him. If Æthelstan's embassy was the first step to a connexion between the two countries, and the alliance of 991 the second, the marriage treaty of 1001 was the one which brought the two countries fairly together. Events had shown that a mere convention such as that of 991 could not prevent Norman ports from being open and Norman aid given to Æthelred's Danish foes. Yet it was of the first importance if

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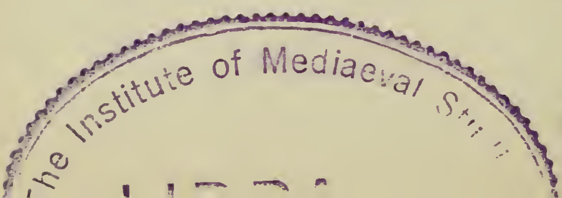
the Channel were to be kept clear that these ports should be closed to them. The measure was therefore right in policy;[1] and in its immediate results proved eminently successful, for from the moment of Emma's marriage Normandy not only stood apart from the Danish attack on its neighbour realm, but drifted more and more into an attitude of hostility against the Dane. It gave refuge to Æthelred when he was driven from his kingdom. It enabled him to return and again seize his crown. It sheltered his children from the hatred of Cnut. It at last plunged into war with the Danish kings for their restoration. But the indirect effects of Emma's marriage were far more momentous than its direct effects, both for England and for Normandy. In severing the duchy from all connexion with its Scandinavian kinsmen, as in binding its rulers by blood-ties to the English Crown, it suddenly opened for its rulers a distinct policy, a distinct course of action, which led to the Norman conquest of England. From the moment of Emma's marriage Normandy became a chief factor in English politics. For the next sixty years we shall have to watch the gradual strengthening of the tie which now for the first time bound the two countries directly together. For fifty years to come England saw a Norman Lady as queen or queen-mother wielding power in the land. The

[1] After the time of Swein's withdrawal, that is, from 997 to 1002, the war had really been a Norman war, fed by fleets finding harbour in Norman ports.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Norman settlement in England began with that of her train. With the shelter given to Æthelred at the Norman court, which was the first result of the marriage, as with its secondary issues in the protection of his children, their Norman training, and the gradual espousal of their claims on the English throne by the Norman nobles, began that interference of the Norman in the fortunes of England which was at last crowned by the victory of Senlac.

Political weakness of England.

Few of these issues, however, could be foreseen when Æthelred in the spring of 1002 brought home the duke's daughter as his wife.[1] All that the king aimed at was to guard against any co-operation of Normandy in the coming attack of Swein, and that result was secured. But Swein had still to be met; and whatever strength Æthelred had gained for this struggle by his foreign policy was more than compensated by the growing weakness within the realm. Since the revolution which followed on the death of Brihtnoth and Æthelwine the number and order of the great ealdormen had remained the same. At their head had stood the two West-Saxon ealdormen, Æthelweard and (in spite of his treason and temporary exile) Ælfric; then the Northumbrian ealdormen, Ælfhelm and Waltheof; then Leofwine of the Hwiccas, and Leofsige of Essex. Ulfcytel, though probably ruling at this time in East-Anglia, still

[1] In Lent 1002.—Eng. Chron. (Peterborough).

bore only the title of thegn.[1] In 999 Æthelweard seems to have been removed by death, and Ælfric takes his place at the head of the ealdormen, but his three fellows remain as before. Leofsige was as active as of old; and while Æthelred was negotiating his Norman marriage the ealdorman of Essex was sent to the pirate fleet to buy a truce at a cost of twenty-four thousand pounds.[2] But the king was still secretly at feud with his counsellors; and in the case of Leofsige the hostility was embittered by the disappointment of the hopes with which Æthelred had raised him to his post. Favourite as he was, no sooner was he made ealdorman than his "pride and daring" and the offence he gave to the king equalled those of his fellow-nobles.[3] Æthelred took refuge in a fresh expedient by raising a new favourite, Æfic, to the post of High Reeve,[4] in which we may perhaps again see a foreshadowing of the coming justiciary.

[1] He first signs as minister in 988 (Cod. Dip. 1289), and is never found as "dux."

[2] Eng. Chron. a. 1001. The old Winchester Chronicle has here appended a curious entry of the year, which gives its proceedings in greater detail.

[3] "Leofsinum," says Æthelred in a charter (Cod. Dip. 719), "quem de satrapis nomine tuli, ad celsioris apicem dignitatis dignum duxi promovere, ducem constituendo, scilicet eum unde humiliari magis debuerat. . . . Sed ipse hoc oblitus, cernens se in culmine majoris status sub rogatu famulari sibi pestilentes spiritus promisit, superbiæ scilicet et audaciæ, quibus nichilominus ipse se dedidit in tantum ut floccipenderet quin offensione multimoda me multoties graviter offenderet."

[4] "Præfectum meum Æficum, quem primatum inter primatos meos taxavi," Cod. Dip. 719. "The King's High Reeve," Eng. Chron. a. 1002.

But the attempt was roughly met; for Leofsige at once broke into Æfic's house, and there slew him.[1]

Weakness of Æthelred.

In the general disgust at such a deed of violence, it was easy for Æthelred to win from the Witan a sentence of degradation and banishment against Leofsige;[2] but the outrage had revealed the inner strife within the royal council which was paralyzing all effective resistance to the Dane. The military measures of resistance were defeated by Æthelred himself. The chastisement of the Ostmen and the marriage alliance with Normandy had deprived Swein of his main sources of help without the realm; while for the defence of England itself Æthelred counted on the help of northmen like Pallig whom he had drawn into his service by offers of pay,[3] and who, like the huscarls that followed them, seem to have been quartered over the country throughout southern Britain. But however effective these measures might have been they were frustrated by the king's quick changes of purpose. Distrust grew up between the king and the northern mercenaries whom he had hired to meet the coming invasion. The security which Æthelred felt from his con-

[1] "Non cunctatus in propria domo ejus eo inscio perimere." —Cod. Dip. 719.

[2] Eng. Chron. a. 1002. Leofsige's signature as ealdorman disappears after the year 1001. Cod. Dip. 719, which shows the Witan's part. The charter is of 1012, and shows how the deed rankled in Æthelred's mind ten years after.

[3] This employment of hired Danes may have been as much to strengthen him against his own ealdormen as against the northmen—an attempt to bring together a standing army.

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nexion with Normandy showed itself in a haughty indifference to their aid, while in both king and people the dread of Swein's invasion broke out in whispers that these strangers were plotting the murder of the king and his Witan, and the seizure of the land; and in November, 1002, the panic spread to Æthelred himself. An order of the king which was welcomed everywhere brought about a general massacre of the Danes on St. Brice's Day,[1] and those who were not slain by the sword were burned in their houses.

Swein's attack.

The whole plan of defence was thus thrown into confusion, when Swein's fleet reached England in the spring of 1003. It steered for Exeter, the dowry town of Emma, and the surrender of the city by Hugh,[2] a Norman follower of the queen whom she had appointed its reeve, at once proclaimed the ruin of Æthelred's hopes from his alliance with the Normans, while it gave a new character to the war. During the previous fifteen years the Danish attacks had been mere plunder-raids; but the fall of Exeter gave Swein a base of operations from which he could advance into the heart of the country. He had marched into Wiltshire before any force could be gathered to oppose him, but here he was met by the fyrd of Wiltshire and Hampshire under the command of their own

[1] November 13. Eng. Chron. a. 1002.

[2] Eng. Chron. a. 1003. The attack on Exeter looks as if Swein came from Normandy, which would explain the betrayal of the city by the Norman Hugh.

ealdorman, Ælfric. For the last few years Ælfric had stood at the head of the royal counsellors; but he was now prostrated with sickness, and his camp torn with strife which in the end left Swein master of the field.[1] The fyrd in fact broke up without fighting, and Swein marched by Wilton and Old Sarum to the sea unhindered.[2] But the war was now to take a wider range. With the exception of a few raids it had been limited for fifteen years, from 988 to 1003, to Wessex. But Wessex must now have been harried till little booty was left. In the next year, 1004, his fleet appeared "unawares" on the coast of East-Anglia, seized and harried Norwich, a town which had grown up at the junction of the Wensum with the Yare, and which was now the chief port on the eastern coast. Ulfcytel, whose name tells of northern blood, was ruler in East-Anglia: and though he bore but the title of thegn, his position seems to have been one of as great independence as that of the earlier ealdormen. The Danes knew the land as "Ulfcytel's land," and now that Swein appeared off the coast the thegn and his Witan made their own treaties and fought their own fights as if East-Anglia were again a separate kingdom. The Witan saw at first no course left save to buy off the invaders;

[1] Ælfric's sickness, which the Chronicle brands as mere treachery, was probably real enough. The strife within the camp had more to do with the breakdown of the fyrd than the sickness of the general. "Hi anræde næron."

[2] "To the sea again, where he knew that his sea-horses were," Eng. Chron. 1003.

but while the truce for this purpose went on, the Danes suddenly marched inland and plundered Thetford. Ulfcytel summoned the fyrd in haste, and thin as were his ranks, the Danes themselves owned that "never worse hand-play met they among Englishmen."[1] But the day still went for the northmen. The East-Anglian fyrd broke with the loss of its noblest warriors, and no hindrance lay in the way of Swein's march into the heart of Britain.

Internal troubles.

Again however the doom of the country was delayed. We do not know whether dangers at home drew Swein from his enterprize, or whether his force was insufficient for a more serious campaign; but from East-Anglia his fleet sailed back again to Denmark, and for a year at least the country had a respite from Danish attack. But it had no respite from the more fatal troubles within. Æfic's place at court was filled by a new high reeve, Wulfgeat, who probably directed the king's policy in the short interval of peace that followed Swein's departure at the end of 1004. But only two years later, in 1006, the new minister was displaced by a revolution which seems to have been accompanied by deeds of violence like those which had accompanied the fall of Æfic.[2] The murder of the Deiran ealdorman

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 1004.

[2] The Chronicle says: "Wulfgeat was deprived of all his goods, Wulfeah and Ufegeat were blinded, and Ealdorman Ælfhelm (of Deira) was slain." This short entry is expanded by Florence, in the twelfth century, into an ambush and murder of Ælfhelm at Shrewsbury by Eadric, and a blinding

Ælfhelm in the course of this revolution brought about a change of government in the north, for Æthelred saw himself forced to undo the policy of Dunstan and Eadgar, to mass together Deira and Bernicia into a single earldom, and to place it in the hands of Uhtred, whose father Waltheof had, as we have seen, been earl of the Bernicians. Uhtred showed his strength by a victory which he gained at Durham over the Scot king, Malcolm, who made at this time an inroad into the north, and Æthelred was glad to bind him to his cause by a marriage with his daughter Ælfgifu.[1]

Eadric.

The fate of Æfic and of Wulfgeat was far from turning Æthelred from his ministerial schemes. The number of the great ealdormen and their influence at court had gone on steadily diminishing. The places of those that died do not seem to have been commonly filled up; and after the death of Ælfhelm only Ælfric and Leofwine remained to sign the royal charters. Uhtred and Ulfcytel existed as provincial rulers, but can have hardly swayed the policy of a court

of "his sons," Wulfeah and Ufegeat, by Æthelred. The story is legendary in form, evidently looks on Eadric as already ealdorman of Mercia in 1006, a year before his appointment, and is of no contemporary value.

[1] Simeon of Durham (Twysden), p. 80. Mr. Freeman seems to have rightly consigned the Scot invasion to this year, though Simeon dates it earlier. It may have been connected with Ælfhelm's murder, which, if we set aside the story in Florence, would seem rather to form part of a struggle which had been going on during this period between the Deiran and Bernician earls, and which, in spite of Waltheof's displacement by the Witan, ended eventually in the triumph of the latter.

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in which they seldom appear. That policy was now Æthelred's own, or rather that of a new high reeve, Eadric, for whom the disgrace of Wulfgeat seems to have made room. While later tradition charged the new minister, as political faction has always charged its opponents, with faithlessness, haughtiness, and pride, it owned his intelligence and his eloquent tongue. What is most notable in the charges brought against him is that of low birth. The tendency of the time, as the growing feudalism of the Continent proves, lay the other way; but while rulers like the Norman dukes would not suffer any but men of noble blood at their court, it marked a larger temper in Æthelred when he raised into power this low-born ceorl solely for his wise head and skill of speech.[1] Eadric may thus have been the predecessor, not only of the obscurely-born Godwine before the Conquest, but of the new men whom our Norman kings, in spite of their nobles, called to the council-board after it. From the outset of his administration we feel a firmer hand in the management of affairs. Though the Danes reappeared on the southern coast, Æthelred himself seems to have met them with the land-fyrd; and while avoiding an engagement, to have held them in check through

[1] Eadric was known in after-times as "Edricus Streona" (Flor. Worc. (ed. Thorpe), vol. i. p. 158), or "acquisitor" (Orderic, Duchesne, "Hist. Norm. Script." p. 506, B). The nickname evidently alludes to his great accumulations of property.

the autumn. On their apparent withdrawal into winter-quarters in the Isle of Wight, the king marched westward to Shrewsbury, and took post on the Severn, no doubt to check the growing turbulence of the Welsh. But the pirates no sooner saw the land clear than they again made a raid as far inland as Berkshire, lighting their war-beacons as they went, and marching along Ashdown as far as the mound of Cuckamsly, as though to defy the old proverb, "Men said if they sought to Cwichelmslowe—they never to sea should gang again."[1] The fyrd of the shires was hastily summoned to cut off their retreat; but it was easily brushed aside, and the pirates carried their booty in triumph to their quarters in the Isle of Wight. As they were masters of the sea it was impossible to drive them from this stronghold, and in 1007 Æthelred and the Witan again bought a truce for the heavy sum of thirty thousand pounds.

Measure of defence.

But the two years of peace which this tribute purchased were not thrown away as previous breathing-spaces had been. Reversing his policy of destroying the great ealdormanries, and equally setting aside the tradition of intrusting these governments to the royal kin, Æthelred now set Eadric as ealdorman over Mercia,[2] or rather over all of it save the land of the Hwiccas, whose ealdorman, Leofwine, still sat in the royal

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 1006. [2] *Ibid.* 1007.

councils.[1] Eadric was bound, like the Northumbrian ealdorman, to the interests of the crown by a marriage with one of Æthelred's daughters, and it was doubtless to him that the active measures of political and military organization which distinguish this period were due. A general oath of fidelity to the king was now exacted from every subject, while a promise of just laws and mild government appealed to the loyalty of all. The oath of allegiance was indeed coupled with the same declaration of loyalty to God and the Church. But if the hand of Archbishop Ælfheah[2] is seen in the injunctions for a better observance of festivals and Church dues and avoidance of "heathenism,"[3] the more practical mind of Eadric turned to measures of defence.

The fyrd and the fleet.

An attempt was made to give fresh life to the fyrd system by dividing the country into military groups, so that "every eight hides sent a helmet and coat of mail;"[4] by exacting heavy penalties from all who did not come to the hosting at the king's call; and by provisions for a punctual payment of the local contributions which were due for the expenses of forts and bridges, or the

[1] Leofwine still goes on signing charters with his old precedence.

[2] Ælfheah was translated from Winchester to Canterbury on the death of Ælfric in 1005. (A. S. G.)

[3] "Ælcne hæthendom mid ealle âweorpan."—Thorpe, "Anc. Laws and Inst." i. 313. These ordinances are dated 1008. Mr. Freeman refers to about the same time the decrees of the undated council of Evesham ("Norm. Conq." i. 335).

[4] Eng. Chron. a. 1008.

defence of the land. More effective steps were taken for the re-organization of the fleet. Nothing is more remarkable throughout Æthelred's reign than the absence of any attempt to meet the Danish ships at sea. It is clear, whatever the cause may have been, that the naval organization of the country had broken down; and it is probable that the small fishing vessels, which were all that the English ports could provide, were unable to cope with the large war vessels now used by the Danes. A special war fleet had in fact to be created; and to create such a fleet it was necessary to call on the resources of the country at large. By the new fleet-law it was provided that every three hundred and ten hides should build and equip a war-ship, and that the fleet should gather round the king once in every year.[1] The law was successfully carried out, and in 1009 Æthelred saw assembled at Sandwich "so many ships as never were before among Angle kin in any king's day."

The Hoard.

The gathering of this fleet is remarkable, not so much in our military as in our financial history. Up to this time the revenue of the crown had been drawn mainly from the rents of its own demesne and the royal dues collected in every shire from thegns who held grants of folk-land. The "Hoard"[2] was made up from other sources of

[1] Eng. Chron. 1008, with Earle's note, pp. 336-7.—Stubbs, "Const. Hist." i. 124.

[2] The "*Hoard*" (not yet the "Exchequer") in Eadward's time was settled at Winchester ("Qui debebant geldum portare

wealth. Here were stored the actual jewels and "ornaments" of the crown, with such treasures as poured in at the death of bishop or earl or thegn. The best horses went to the king's stable; into his armoury went helmet and coat of mail and spear and sword and shield. With them passed into the hoard the two pounds of the dead thegn or the two hundred mancuses of the dead earl; and beside the coin stood heriots of price, such silver cups as those of Bishop Theodred, the silver vessels of Ealdorman Æthelwold, heavy gold rings and gold-hilted swords, costly dishes, spears twined with gold, palls of silk, and drinking-horns.[1] There too came the costlier chattels forfeited by their owner's treason or desertion in war; the "rings and bright gems" of the treasure-trove, the "finds" in mound or burial-place, in spite of spells and dragon watchers; the bribe or fee for charter or grant, for great offices or bishoprics; the Jew's fine, the widow's marriage dues.[2]

ad thesaurum regis Wintoniæ," Sim. Durh. "Hist. Eccl. Dunelm." (Twysden), p. 65); in Dunstan's day, as we see from the story of Eadred's death, it was with the king at Glastonbury or elsewhere.

[1] See instances in Kemble, "Sax. in Eng." ii. 99, etc.

[2] Prof. Stubbs ("Const. Hist." i. 142) groups royal revenue—

(*a*) From land. 1. King's private estate, either boc-land, or folk-land, of which he had taken leases of lives. 2. The demesne of the crown, its vills and manors and tuns and boroughs. 3. Rights over folk-land, of feorm-fultum and gifts to dependants. "After the reign of Æthelred this third class of property seems to have merged in the crown-demesne" (*ibid.* 143).

(*b*) Other revenue. 1. Proceeds of courts of law, escheats and forfeitures. 2. Right of maintenance on progress. 3.

But a revenue of this sort was wholly inadequate to meet the new charges of a government which had become national, or the cost of national defence. The ship-levy and the Danegeld were

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The land-tax.

Wreck and treasure-trove. 4. Mines and salt-works. 5. Tolls, market-dues and port-dues. 6. Heriots and other semi-feudal payments.

Of these, the first division contributed little to the hoard. The payments from private or public lands of the crown were almost wholly in kind. Till the time of Henry I. the tenants on royal demesne paid their dues in kind. Feorm-fultum was not commuted into a money-payment till after the Conquest. It is hard to estimate the revenue drawn from the demesnes of the crown, from the boroughs in demesne, from lands falling in by escheat, whether through treason and confiscation or through death without heirs, from the justice-dues of courts, whether royal or hundred-courts in the royal demesne which the king held as land-owner, from ship-money, from fultum, wrecks, etc., market-tolls and port-dues, salt-dues, mines, treasure-trove, compositions for military service. (See Stubbs, "Const. Hist." i. 88, 117, 143.) But clearly all these made a much larger sum than we commonly think of as the royal revenue of the time. (See Freeman, "Norm. Conq." v. 437-441, 471.)

Feorm-fultum, the tax for the king's sustentation as he went through his realm, was in fact a tax for the "civil service," as the whole machinery of government and administration passed with him over the country. The composition for it varied greatly. As it arose from what had been the folk-land, this may vary with the shire. Thus Oxfordshire paid feorm of three nights or £150 ; Warwick £65 and thirty-six sextaries of honey ; Northamptonshire feorm of three nights ; Dorset paid feorm of seven days and nights. (Cf. Ellis, "Introd. to Dom." i. 261-2, who adduces others.) The king's demesne —exempt from Danegeld—paid the feorm. In Dorset the royal manors were grouped for this purpose: three such groups pay each "firma unius noctis," two "dimidia firma unius noctis" ; one paid in refined coin—"hoc manerium cum suis pertinentibus reddit 45 libras albas." One sees here a minute and well-organized machinery of finance.

Thus under Æthelred the scheme of taxation stands thus. The royal demesnes, including the towns, bear the cost of the civil service, so far as it had yet been concentrated round the crown. The cost of the military services was borne directly

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the first beginnings of a national taxation.[1] They were in fact the first forms of that land-tax which constituted the most important element in the national revenue from the days of Æthelred to the days of the Georges. As a national tax levied by the Witan of all England, and passing into the hands of the king of all England, this tax practically brought home the national idea as it had never been brought home before. Its levy too must have necessitated the preliminary steps of a national survey, and of some record of that survey like the later Domesday book, in which, as it would seem, the hide was taken no longer as a local measure, but as a measure of value. The levy, again, of these taxes could only have been made by the royal reeve in each shire, whose post was thus raised to a higher importance, while their payment into the royal hoard implies that some such administrative machinery as the later exchequer for the due receipt and acquittal of these sums was already in existence, though unnoticed by our chroniclers.

It is thus that our financial system traces

by the thegns, who contributed personal service and whose demesne lands were in return exempted from geld; and indirectly by the general land, which was assessed on a scheme of hideage or proportionate value. "Ship-money" may have been a branch of this land-tax. The later Huscarl-tax of Cnut looks like a diversion of the "feorm-fultum" of the boroughs on which it fell to military services.

[1] "It may be questioned whether any money taxation, properly so called, ever existed before the imposition of the Danegeld by Æthelred."—Stubbs, "Const. Hist." i. 123.

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Attack under Thurkill.

itself back to the days of Æthelred. But its organization, like the attempt to re-organize the system of national defence, came too late. The country was cowed. During the past twenty years every shire in Wessex had been harried again and again, and if the rest of England had as yet been spared, the pirates had at any rate once carried their ravages over East-Anglia. So utterly had the fyrd system broken down that in the past year, when the Witan of Wessex was gathered together to repel the Danes, none could bethink them how "to drive out" the strangers, and as we have seen, a truce was purchased with hard cash. The attempt to command the sea broke down at the first trial of the new fleet. A detachment of eighty ships sent to clear the coast of Sussex of an English pirate[1] who was harrying it was dashed to pieces by a storm; and when the news reached the main force under the king[2] the panic was so great that on the withdrawal of Æthelred the fleet went round to London and broke up. The ships had hardly gone home when a Danish squadron appeared in the Thames, ravaging Kent, harrying the Thames valley as far as Oxford, and burning that city. The leader of this force was Thurkill, a son of

[1] A charge brought against this "Child Wulfnoth, the South Saxon," by Eadric's brother, Brihtnoth, and the flight of Wulfnoth with his ships show the strife that was still going on between the nobles and the "new men" about the king.—Eng. Chron. a. 1009.

[2] The Chronicle says, "It was as though all were redeless."

Strut-Harald, the jarl of Zeeland, and perhaps his father's successor in this jarldom, while his brother Sigwald was jarl at Jomsborg. Both had joined in the vow at Harald's funeral feast; but while the bulk of the Jomsborgers fell in the fight with Jarl Hakon, the two brothers returned unharmed to Denmark; and it was to Thurkill that Swein intrusted forty ships with some three thousand men to carry on the attack on England. Small as the force was, the measures taken to meet it proved utterly ineffective. Even when his fyrd fronted the Danes, Eadric hindered it from engaging,[1] and the wisdom of his caution was shown in the next year, 1010, when Thurkill's force sailed round to East-Anglia, and after a stout fight with Ulfcytel utterly defeated its fyrd. After harrying East-Anglia for three months, and ravaging the whole country to the "wild fens," Thurkill returned to the mouth of the Thames; but in a second raid suddenly swept westward into Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, and thence along the Ouse to Bedford; a third took the pirates inland as far as Northampton, where they had burned the town and harried the land before the close of November; and thence passed over the Thames again to plunder Wessex and Wiltshire before returning at midwinter to their ships.

The rapidity of the Danish movements still as

[1] The Chronicle says, "Ealdorman Eadric hindered it, as he ever did," but mentions no other instance. Florence of course greatly expands this entry.

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The great tribute.

of old baffled resistance. "When they were east, then held men the fyrd west, and when they were at the south, then was our fyrd northwards." The Witan again gathered round Æthelred, and devised how to guard the land. But "though they devised somewhat, that stood not so much as a month." The want of national unity could not be remedied by laws, and what most helped Thurkill was the growth of provincial isolation. All national organization seemed to have broken down.[1] Eadric himself fell back into his own "Myrcenarice," or Mercian realm, as it is still significantly called,[2] which had remained till this last raid of Thurkill's untouched by the pirates; and when a fresh withdrawal of the Danes was purchased by a promise of a yet larger tribute, he seized the moment to secure his own western frontier against the Welsh, whose attacks must have been roused by the raids of the pirates, and carried his ravages along the whole Welsh coast as far as St. David's. But while he was busy with the Welsh Æthelred had failed to pay the tribute, and Thurkill again swooped upon Canterbury, sacked the town and seized Archbishop Ælfheah as a hostage for its payment.[3] Fresh promises were made, and in the spring of 1012 the Witan again met to provide the sum. An

[1] "At last there was no leader that would gather forces, but each fled as he best might; nor at the last would shire help shire."—Eng. Chron. 1010.

[2] Eng. Chron. a. 1007.

[3] *Ibid.* 1011.

outbreak of drunken wrath, indeed, deprived the Danes of their hostage, for on his refusal to redeem himself Ælfheah was pelted by the drunken warriors with stones and ox-horns till one more pitiful clave his head with an axe. In spite, however, of this brutal deed the great tribute was paid, and the Danish fleet at last sailed away from the English coast.

Conquest of Swein.

Their leader Thurkill however remained with forty-five ships as a mercenary in English pay.[1] The humiliation indeed to which the realm had stooped in the payment of the great tribute had been forced on it by more than its terror of Thurkill's force, for it must have been known now that a far more terrible attack under Swein himself was preparing in the North. In July, 1013, Swein appeared off the coast, and after landing at Sandwich suddenly entered the Humber. The size and number of his ships, the splendour of their equipment, the towers on their forecastles, the lions, eagles, and dragons of gold and silver which glittered on their topmasts, their brazen beaks, the colours that decked their keels,[2] showed that his aim was no mere plunder-raid. The time had in fact come for the conquest of England. Wessex, spent with the long strife, lay helpless and inactive, while Swein called on the Danelaw

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 1012. The "Encomium Emmæ" (Langebek), ii. 475, represents the desertion of Thurkill and his detention of Swein's ships as a cause of Swein's after attack.

[2] "Encom. Emmæ" (Langebek), ii. 476.

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to finish the work which had been so long held in check by the vigour of the house of Ælfred. But even Ælfred or Eadward would have failed to check it had it been backed, as now, by the armed force of Denmark itself. All was in fact over when the presence of Earl Uhtred with his Northumbrians in Swein's camp announced that the Danelaw had risen. The fiction of a single England, of an English Empire throughout Britain, which the clerks of Winchester had dressed up in the pompous titles of their charters, disappeared like a dream. The great ealdormen again showed themselves in their true light as disintegrating forces. The Northumbrian earl joined Swein as an independent power. The East-Anglian ealdorman followed his example. The Lindsey folk and the Five Boroughs, all England north of Watling Street, submitted to him at Gainsborough, and hostages were delivered to him from every shire. Eadric seems to have withdrawn into his own Mercian ealdormanry along the Severn, and to have stood apart from the struggle. From Emperor and Lord of Britain Æthelred saw himself shrink at the hard touch of reality into a King of Wessex, and of a Wessex helpless before the junction of the rest of Britain with a foreign foe.

Flight of Æthelred.

Resistance was in fact impossible. Master without a blow of Northern and Midland Britain, Swein horsed his host, and gathering the fyrd of

the shires which adhered to him, marched southward. "After they came over Watling Street they wrought the most evil that any host might do."[1] By Oxford he passed into the heart of Wessex, where Winchester submitted to his arms. From Winchester he turned upon London, into which Æthelred and Thurkill had thrown themselves. But the town made a vigorous defence, and Swein was forced to fall back to Wallingford for a passage over the Thames to Bath, to complete his work by the reduction of Wessex. The submission of Winchester had carried with it that of the Central Provinces, whose ealdorman, Ælfric, still clung to the court. But the Western Provinces, the Wessex beyond Selwood where Ælfred had rallied his men at the last moment of the fight with Guthrum, remained unconquered under Æthelmær, who a few years back had succeeded Æthelweard as ealdorman.[2] But even in this heart of West-Saxon life provincial was stronger than national feeling. At Bath Swein was met by Æthelmær and the western thegns; and their submission left him lord of all England. London itself, left alone in its resistance, sent hostages to the Danish king, while Æthelred after sending Emma and her two boys to their uncle, Duke Richard, took refuge in Thurkill's squadron, and after hovering through the early winter off

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 1013.
[2] *Ibid.* a. 1013. Æthelweard disappears from the charters in 999.

the coast sailed in despair at Christmas-tide to join them in Normandy.

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Its results.

With the flight of the king ended the long effort of Wessex to maintain her supremacy over Britain. It had indeed other issues little foreseen at the moment, for it was the Norman influences which from this time surrounded the English royal house that prepared the way for the presence of the Norman in England itself. Æthelred's two boys were from this time dwellers not on English but on Norman soil. From childhood to manhood they grew up as Normans among their Norman kinsfolk. Ælfred, the elder of them, was to return to England with Norman soldiers to claim his father's realm, to perish on the ground he claimed, and to leave a heritage of revenge amongst the Normans against Englishmen which only slaked itself in the bloodshed of Senlac. The fortunes of his brother Eadward were destined to be yet more fatal to England. Bred and sheltered in the Norman land till its temper and language became his own, he came as a Norman to the English throne, and the reign of the Normanized Confessor brought with it as an inevitable necessity the Norman conquest of England.

Death of Swein.

Had Æthelred delayed his flight but for a month the scene would suddenly have changed. At the opening of February, 1014, Swein died suddenly at Gainsborough, and his death at once

broke the spell of terror which had fallen on the land. The Witan gathered to send letters over sea to Æthelred bidding him know that "no lord was more dear to them than their own lord, if he would hold them in rightlier wise than he did aforetime." The terms were accepted. Æthelred sent Eadmund with pledges that he would be a faithful lord to them and amend all they hated; "they then established full friendship by word and pledge on either half, and declared every Danish king an outlaw from England for ever." Leaving Emma and her two children at Richard's court, the king at once put to sea,[1] to receive a joyous welcome in London, and hastily gathering troops marched upon Gainsborough, where the Danish host had chosen Cnut, Swein's young son, for king. Cnut was in fact already bargaining with the men of Lindsey for aid in a joint raid on the south, but before Æthelred's vigorous attack he forsook Britain and sailed away to his northern home.

Cnut's invasion.

It may be doubted, indeed, whether his return to the north was due as much to the attack of Æthelred as to the news that another son of Swein, Harald, had already mounted the Danish throne. It is said that an arrangement was made between the brothers by the wisdom of Thurkill, who proposed that Harald should rule in Denmark

[1] For the tale of Æthelred's being brought back by the fleet of St. Olaf, see Corp. Poet. Boreale (G. Vigfusson and F. York Powell), ii. 116, 153. (A. S. G.)

while Cnut returned to conquer England. However this may have been, it is certain Thurkill quitted Æthelred—it may be this was in itself a part of the bargain between the king and his subjects—and in the coming struggle fought side by side with his own northern folk. Cnut's ambition can have needed little urging to the winning of a land twice the size of his own Denmark, and vastly greater in wealth and population. His vigour showed itself in the rapidity with which a fleet even more numerous and splendid than his father's gathered in 1015 for a fresh attack on Britain. Fortune already favoured his cause. The loss of Thurkill's military force was not made up by national vigour. The union which had been sealed by solemn pact between Æthelred and his Witan was already at an end; the English court was again torn with strife; and though the king himself, who was drawing fast to the death which followed in the coming year, could take little part in the struggle, the fight he had fought against the great nobles was taken up fiercely by his son. The contest between Eadmund and Ealdorman Eadric proved more fatal to England than any of its predecessors. Of the origin or real nature of the quarrel we know nothing, but Eadmund seems to have revolted against the power which Eadric exercised over the king. Its first outbreak was at the Witenagemot at Oxford, where Eadric is said to have drawn

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two "chief thegns of the Seven Boroughs" into his chamber and to have slain them. The thegns may have been supporters of Eadmund, for after a short while Eadmund, against his father's will, took the widow of one of them to wife, seized their lands, and made himself head of their people.[1]

Dissensions in England.

The quarrel had just broken out when Cnut appeared ravaging the Wessex coast, and its results at once showed themselves in the old fatal discord in the face of the national enemy. The host gathered to meet Cnut under Eadric, but no sooner had Eadmund joined it with forces from the North than charges of treachery parted the two leaders, and the English army broke up without any fight. A yet more fatal issue followed. Æthelred must now have been dying, and Eadric, conscious that his death would leave him in the hands of a king who was his avowed enemy, saw no resource save one. He joined Cnut with forty ships, and the balance of the war turned at once in favour of the Dane. The men of Wessex submitted to him, and with the opening of the year 1016 his host advanced across the Thames, ravaging at its will. It was in vain that Eadmund gathered forces to oppose Cnut and Eadric, for the army was no sooner assembled than it refused to march

[1] Eng. Chron. a. 1015. As these lands were in Eadric's ealdormanry this may have been an effort to break up the ealdorman's power at home, but we have no means of deciding the matter.

without the king; and when Æthelred joined his son, and a more stringent summons called men to the royal standard, the general distrust still paralyzed action "It was made known to the king that men would betray him"; and Æthelred sailed again in terror to London, while his son fell back on Northumbria and sought aid from his brother-in-law, Earl Uhtred. Their joint army however broke up as soon as Cnut, who had been wasting eastern Mercia unopposed, advanced by Lincoln upon York, and while Uhtred and the Northumbrians submitted to the conqueror, Eadmund fled to join his father in London.

Eadmund Ironside.

It was at this moment that London first took the leading part in English history which it has maintained ever since. The city stood alone in its loyalty to the house of Cerdic, for almost all England from the Channel to the Forth had now bowed to the Dane. But the spirit of its burghers remained unbroken. As Cnut and Eadric advanced from the north to complete their work by a siege of the town, Æthelred died within its walls in April 1016; but Eadmund was at once chosen king by those of the Witan who remained with him and by the Londoners. Once crowned, he showed a temper worthy of his line. Quitting London before its investment he hurried into Somerset and Devon, the only shires that still clung to him, where his presence roused part at least of the West-Saxons from their apathy, and

again returned with a small force to the relief of the town, which, though girt by a great trench and repeatedly attacked, held its assailants stoutly at bay. The news of his advance forced Cnut to leave the besieging army round London, and to march with an English host under Eadric and two other ealdormen to meet the king. Two indecisive engagements on the borders of Wiltshire were followed by the withdrawal of both the fighting forces; but rapidly gathering a greater host Eadmund took advantage of the opening left by Cnut's retreat, and striking along the north bank of the Thames succeeded in his aim. London was relieved and the besiegers were driven to their ships and beaten in a sally at Brentford. The relief indeed was only for a moment; Eadmund retreated again to the west, and Cnut drew his levies again round about London. But his renewed attack was as unsuccessful as his old; and the Danish host were at last forced by want of supplies to break up the siege.

Assandun.

The failure gave fresh strength and hope to Eadmund. While Cnut ravaged in Mercia and coasted back with less spirit to the Medway, the young king again advanced with his forces from the west, broke up the Danish quarters in Kent, and drove their host into the Isle of Sheppey. The change of fortune was seen in Eadric's change of attitude. From the hour of strife after Eadmund's marriage Eadric had stood firmly by the

Danes. But with the progress of the struggle, and the development of the king's noble qualities, the family ties which bound Eadric to his royal brother-in-law regained their power. It may be too that Eadric already discerned Cnut's jealousy of his influence, and that he was shaken by the murder of his brother-in-law, Uhtred of Northumbria, who had been slain after his submission, and his earldom given to Eric the Norwegian. Whatever was the ground of his resolve, king and ealdorman now met at Aylesford, and Eadric forsook Cnut to resume his place beside Eadmund Ironside, as he was now called for his "snell schipe." The accession of strength which his junction gave Eadmund spurred the king to a decisive struggle. His force indeed had now swelled from the "fyrd" of a couple of shires such as fought at Pen and Sherstone to a national host, for Eadric brought him the Mercians even to the Magesætas of Herefordshire, while Ulfcytel had joined him with the East Anglians, who had already exchanged such hard blows with the Danes at Maldon. Eadmund marched resolutely on Cnut's army, which had crossed the Thames and was slowly withdrawing through Essex. He forced it to engage at Assandun, on a swampy field along the Crouch. The fight was a stubborn one; the sun set on the still struggling hosts, but the day went against the English army. Its loss was terrible. The two chiefs of East Anglia,

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Ulfcytel and Æthelweard, the son of Æthelwine, lay amidst a host of dead. "All the English nobles were slain," says the chronicler. The old jealousies and suspicions indeed raged even on the battle-field. The reconciliation with Eadric had been sullenly submitted to by Eadmund's West-Saxon followers, and their ill-will broke out in a charge that Eadric and his men were the first to fly from the field of Assandun. But in spite of these charges of treason it was Eadric who was now Eadmund's only hope. The king fell back with the ealdorman on the Severn, pursued by Cnut as soon as he learnt the line of his retreat, and it was by Eadric's interposition that further conflict was averted. Pledges and oaths were given by the two rivals to each other in the Isle of Olney in the Severn by Deerhurst, and the realm was divided between the English and the Danish leaders as in Ælfred's day, Wessex and the English Mercia remaining to Eadmund.[1] But the strain and failure of his seven months' reign proved fatal to the young king. He shared, no doubt, the weak constitution of his race, and at the close of November his body was borne to Glastonbury to lie beside his grandfather Eadgar.

[1] The Encomium and Florence of Worcester make Cnut fall back on London, and Henry of Huntingdon says, "Lundoniam et sceptra cepit regalia," p. 185 (ed. Arnold).

CHAPTER IX

THE REIGN OF CNUT

1016–1035

The rule of Cnut.

With the death of Eadmund the whole aspect of English affairs suddenly changed. The land which had seemed under Æthelred but a bundle of isolated shires, and whose fortunes had been the sport of warring ealdormen, became a great and tranquil nation owning from end to end the supremacy of the crown. The secret of the change lay in more than the exhaustion and the passion for rest which always follow a period of weary strife; it was that the country now found itself in the hands of a great ruler. Cnut was still in the first flush of youth, for he was but twenty-two when the death of his rival left him unchallenged king of all England, and his temper, so far as it had yet been seen, promised little more than a brutal conqueror. Quick in seizing the decisive point of attack in his siege of London, and stubborn in holding it, he had proved himself

indeed a born general, as great on the battle-field as in the plan of his campaign. But the skill and bravery of the northman seemed linked in him to the northman's ruthlessness. Men remembered the pitiless cruelty which was so long to sully his greatness, when three years before in his retreat from Gainsborough he had mutilated and set ashore the hostages whom Swein had taken to secure the loyalty of Englishmen. And in the first months of his rule the same stern temper was shown in the measures by which his authority was secured. Policy, indeed, had its share with cruelty in the blood-shedding with which the reign opened. The new king's hand fell heavily on the great nobles whose strife had been the weakness of the Crown. The two ealdormen of East Anglia lay dead at Assandun. The sons-in-law of Æthelred who held north and middle England in their hands met a like fate; for a murder rid Cnut of Uhtred the ealdorman of Northumbria; while Eadric of Mercia, whom the division of the realm had left all powerful, was summoned to the court at Eadmund's death and fell by an axe-blow at the king's signal. Before the year was out three other nobles of dangerous rank and position had been condemned and slain at London.

His marriage.

England indeed lay crushed and helpless under the rule of its foreign master; for if Mercia was placed after Eadric's death in the hands of the English ealdorman Leofwine, Northumbria was

given to the Norwegian Eric, and East Anglia to the Dane Thurkill, while Wessex was held by the conqueror himself. Nor was Cnut less ruthless in the steps by which he secured his throne against the house of Cerdic. Murder removed a brother of Eadmund Ironside, while Eadmund's children were hunted into Hungary by his pitiless hate. But the removal of these rivals still left Cnut uneasy on his throne. Æthelred's two sons by his marriage with Emma, Ælfred and Eadward, had remained with their mother at the court of Rouen; and Richard the Good, hampered though he was with border wars, was too dangerous a foe to neglect. The young Normans who, weary of peace and order, were just now following Roger de Toesny to Spain for a blow at the Moslem, would as soon have followed him to England to strike a blow for their duke's nephews. But Cnut matched the marriage policy of Æthelred with a marriage policy of his own. Young as he was, he was perhaps already father by an earlier wife of two children, Swein and Harald; but these with their mother were set aside, and the king sought for wife Æthelred's widow and the mother of his only rivals, Emma herself. Emma was ten years older than her new wooer, but her consent seems to have been quickly given, and her brother, the Norman duke, would naturally see in this new alliance the advantage he had seen in the old.

With the murder of Eadric and the marriage of

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The Danish Conquest.

Emma all danger of a disputed throne was at an end; and with the passing away of his dread, the nobler and grander features of Cnut's temper were to develop themselves. The conqueror rose suddenly into a wise and temperate king. In nothing did his greatness show itself more clearly than in his anxiety to obliterate from men's minds the foreign character of his rule. At first sight indeed his triumph appeared to be a crowning of the long effort which the northmen had been making for two hundred years to win Britain for their own; for in spite of Ælfred's struggle and of the victories of his sons, it seemed as though a Danish conquest and the rule of a Danish king had won the land for the Dane. It would be hard to overrate the results of such a winning. England would have been torn from all union with western Christendom; it would have sunk into one of the Scandinavian realms; and its fortunes would have been linked with those of Northern Europe. Nor would the results of such a change have been simply political, for the country would have been cut off from the enlightenment and civilization which its actual relations with the west were slowly introducing, while Scandinavia, whose lands were even now hardly emerging from barbarism, had no new element of progress to offer. But what might have been possible a hundred years before was impossible now. The success of the Dane had in fact come too late. Had Ælfred failed to arrest

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Guthrum's conquest our whole history might have changed. In spite of its union under Ecgberht England was then but a mass of isolated kingdoms without national consciousness or national cohesion. Once at the northman's feet, there was little to prevent it from becoming a northman's land, like its own Danelaw or like the Normandy at the mouth of Seine, a land where the bulk of the ruling class would have been Scandinavians, and whose local position would have made possible, what local position made impossible for Normandy, that it should be linked politically with the Scandinavian realm. But what might have been in Ælfred's day could no longer be now. The work of a hundred years had made the country a single England. The long war had kindled a national consciousness, and had brought about a national union, which no defeat could undo. The victories and the greatness of the house of Ælfred had begotten a pride in the English name, while the peace and prosperity of reigns like those of Æthelstan or Eadgar had raised the land to a new wealth, a new industrial energy. Political feuds might lay such a land at the feet of a Scandinavian ruler, but it was impossible that it could henceforth live a merely Scandinavian life.

Its character.

The conditions, too, under which a nation loses its older identity, were no longer present. The social and political traditions of the English people were henceforth in no danger of being merged and

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lost in the customs of its conquerors. Had the pirates won a hundred years back, their settlement in England would have been an element of the first importance in determining its political character. The earlier Danish conquerors were colonists as well as conquerors, and settlers in the lands they won. But the old period of dispersion, of wandering, of colonization, was over for the Scandinavian peoples. Their revolutions at home had built up the petty realms of the North into great monarchies, whose military force had been shown in the conquest of England. But with these revolutions the migration and settlement of the sea-rovers had ceased. The colonists of the Danelaw had been fairly absorbed in the English people, and Cnut's conquest brought no new settlers. Guthrum was the head of a host which settled on the soil which Guthrum won. Cnut was the general of an army which sailed back again homewards when its war work was done.

Its results.

The result of the Danish conquest was in fact the very reverse of what it seemed destined to be. It was not Scandinavia that drew England to it, it was England that was brought to wield a new influence over Scandinavia. The North was governed by orders from Winchester. Cnut's northern realms sank into under-kingdoms, ruled by under-kings; Denmark by one of his young sons, Norway in later days by another. It was with English troops that Cnut sailed at long

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intervals to repress revolt in the northern seas, to fight the Wends, to annex Norway to his Danish realm. It was by despatching English bishops and English preachers to the North that he pushed on the work of its civilization and its conversion to Christianity. The Danes who remained with the king in England held only subordinate offices. Even those whom he had rewarded with high rank in the first flush of victory, were gradually set aside for men of English blood. Thurkill was driven from the land only four years after he had entered on his earldom of East Anglia;[1] Cnut's nephew, Hakon, was sent to rule in Norway;[2] while of his two brothers-in-law, one, Earl Ulf, quitted England to bear rule in Denmark,[3] and a second, Earl Eric, was stripped of his power in Northumbria and banished from the realm.[4]

The policy of Cnut.

Cnut was himself the most prominent sign of the influence of England on its Danish conquerors. With the instinct of genius, the young king from almost the first moment of his reign cast off the Dane to stand before his people as an English ruler. Fresh from the bloodshed of Assandun, fresh from the brutal murders which secured his throne, Cnut threw himself on the loyalty of his English subjects. Of the fleet and

[1] In 1021. Eng. Chron. (A. S. G.)
[2] In 1029. (A. S. G.) [3] Probably in 1019. (A. S. G.)
[4] The last charter signed by Eric is in 1023.—Cod. Dip. 1239. (A. S. G.)

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host which had brought England to his feet, he kept but forty ships and a few thousands of hus-carls, a paid body-guard which was strong enough to check isolated disaffection but helpless against a national revolt. By the summons of the bishops, ealdormen, and thegns to a great assembly on Eadmund's death, he showed that his authority was henceforth to rest not on force of arms but on law and custom. The solemn choice and crowning of Cnut at London stamped him in the eyes of the people at large as an English king rather than a foreign master; while his formal renewal of Eadgar's laws in a Witenagemot at Oxford marked his resolve to rule in English fashion. How completely indeed he had already identified himself with his new English realm we see from his relations with his Danish kingdom.[1] If he visited it during the winter of 1019-20, it was but to make such arrangements as left Denmark practically a sub-kingdom, whose interests were subordinated to those of England. Jarl Ulf, who was bound to the throne by his marriage with the king's sister Estrith,[2] was placed as governor over Cnut's hereditary kingdom, which henceforth saw itself ruled by orders from a king

[1] Denmark probably passed to Cnut little more than a year after his coronation as king of the English if his brother Harald died about 1018.—Dahlmann, "Geschichte von Dännemark," i. 105. (A. S. G.)

[2] This cannot have been later than 1019, as the age of Swein Estrithson shows.—Dahlmann, "Geschichte von Dännemark." (A. S. G.)

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transformed from a Dane into an Englishman, and reigning at Winchester. With the early spring Cnut was back in England, and save for this and perhaps one other brief absence, the first eight years of his reign seem to have been spent in the settlement of English affairs.

His government.

The pledge he gave at the outset of his reign that he would rule after Eadgar's law, that he would be true—in modern phrase—to the traditional constitution and usages of the realm, was religiously observed. The laws he enacted later followed those of his predecessors. The structure of government, the control of the Witan, the rule of ealdorman and bishop, the jurisdiction of shire-moot and hundred-moot and town-moot, remained unchanged. The royal progresses were diligently carried on, when the king, with his following of counsellors and scribes, administered justice and redressed wrong as Eadgar and Ælfred had done before him. The old organization of the country too was gradually restored, and the more galling marks of foreign rule done away. Englishmen were set over the great earldoms; and even the traditional connexions of the ruling houses were respected. The new earl of Mercia, Leofwine, had before been ealdorman of the Mercian district of the Hwiccas, and was succeeded in this post by his son Leofric; and when Eric the Norwegian was driven into exile, Eadwulf, a brother of the murdered ealdorman Uhtred, was suffered to hold

the hereditary possession of his house as Earl of Northumbria. Wessex remained for a time the special district of the king. But when, in 1020, possibly as a result of the addition of the Danish monarchy to his English realm, and the administrative difficulties which this brought about, Cnut formed it into an earldom, it was the English Godwine whom he chose for its ruler.

Godwine.

From the outset of his reign the king had shown favour to Godwine, a thegn of West-Saxon blood, but whose parentage and rank are utterly unknown. The tradition of a humble origin, and his position at the court, show that Cnut was imitating Æthelred's policy in raising "new men" to high place in the royal councils. But whatever may have been his early rank, the ability Godwine showed both in the field and at the council board, his eloquence, his pleasant and ready temper, and his laborious industry, were soon rewarded with the hand of Gytha, the sister of jarl Ulf, who was himself wedded to the sister of Cnut. Such an alliance brought the new favourite near to the throne itself; but it was the prelude to yet greater honours. From 1020 he became the chief councillor of the king; he held an important office as governor of the realm in Cnut's absence during the wars in the north, and he probably possessed the earldom of Wessex with which we find him invested at Cnut's death. By that time, as his signatures show, he ranked first among the English

nobles, and before even the kinsmen of the king, while his wealth was enormous and his possessions extended over nearly every shire of southern and central England.

The ealdormen.

The history of England in fact under its Danish conquerors was really a development of those institutions, whether administrative, fiscal, or judicial, which had been growing into shape under its West-Saxon kings. The conquest brought no violent interruption to this development—rather, by the social and political revolution it wrought, it enabled the conqueror to carry out the work of his predecessors more rapidly and completely than would have been possible without so great a shock. In the local organization of the realm the circumstances of Cnut's conquest left him no choice but to carry out in its entirety that change in the character of the great provincial governments which had been attempted by Æthelred in the case of Mercia. Æthelred's policy had implied the breaking down of the traditional West-Saxon system of the government of these dependencies by men of royal blood, and the appointment of ordinary delegates of the crown. Under Cnut this system was rapidly extended. The ealdormanries were changed into earldoms and the earls into pure nominees and dependants of the crown, a transformation which was marked by their summary displacement and replacement in their posts; and the policy of

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System of administration.

Æthelred, adopted first by his Danish successor, was finally made the basis of the system of the Norman Conqueror.

The administrative system, too, had been taking new form under Æthelred, and the stormy character of his reign had shown the difficulties that attended the change. In his youth indeed when little alteration seems to have been made, government was still in the hands of one of the great ealdormen, and even after the king had arrived at full power, Archbishop Sigeric seems to have retained something of the same position of standing councillor of the realm which Dunstan had identified with the office of the primate. But as years drew on the appearance of a new officer at court, the High Thegn, marked the beginning of an attempt on the part of the king to supersede the traditional and constitutional advisers by ministers of a more modern type chosen by and dependent on himself. Some such modification had become absolutely necessary under the conditions of the new English kingdom. With the increasing demands for government and administration over so wide an area, and the growing complexity of England's foreign relations, the need of a continuous ministry in constant communication with the king made itself more and more felt, and unpopular as was the institution of the head thegn, it became of the first importance from the wide extent of the

empire over which Cnut ruled, and the necessity of delegating his authority during any absence from his English dominions. The office indeed was not only continued by Cnut, but raised by him into a prominence it never afterwards lost. The transformation of the head thegn into a "Secundarius Regis" in the person of Godwine, marked a step towards the creation of the later Justiciary and of the ministerial system which lasted on to the close of the Angevin reigns.

The king's chaplains.

With the creation, however, of such an officer the system of Dunstan came practically to an end. The primate retained his position as councillor of the realm in virtue of his representation of the liberties of the Church and of the people, but his power was that of a constitutional check, not of a minister of the crown; while the earls were only summoned to the three great Witenagemots to counsel on the affairs of the realm. The ordinary administration lay therefore wholly in the hands of the king and of his ministers. But for the carrying out of the details of government a staff of secretaries had now become necessary, and there are found from this time in the king's chaplains a group of men, some of whom were foreigners, like Duduc, who may have been chosen specially with a view to the transaction of foreign affairs, while others, like Stigand, were Englishmen; but all of whom were clearly picked men, and, as we see when they appear as bishops in

later days, men of ability. The reward for their work was in most cases an episcopal see, and from now right up to the Reformation, service at the royal council-board became the ordinary road to a bishopric. It was to this fact that the English episcopate from this time owed its peculiarly political character and its close relations to the crown, and hence the institution of the "Royal Chapel" is one of the most important landmarks in our ecclesiastical history. But politically its effects were far greater. Administration, indeed, in any true sense was now for the first time made really possible by the existence of a body of selected and trained administrators, constantly at work, and always at the disposal of the crown for fiscal, political, or judicial purposes, a body which, reappearing in the justiciary and his ring of assistant secretaries, formed the nucleus of that permanent royal council out of which all our judicial institutions, and to some extent our parliament itself, has sprung.

Taxation.

Of even greater moment than Æthelred's administrative changes was his fiscal revolution. The establishment of a land-tax had been attributed in popular fancy to the need of paying Danish tribute, as its name of Danegeld shows. But its continuance from this moment, whether Danes were in the land or no, shows that the need of meeting their demands had only forced to the front a financial measure which had become

inevitable, and which was necessarily carried on under Æthelred's successors. The land-tax thus imposed formed the chief resource of the crown till the time of the Angevins; and though the taxation of personalty was introduced by Henry II., the land-tax still remained the main basis of English finance till the beginning of the eighteenth century. Its direct effects from the first in furnishing the crown with a large and continuous revenue gave a new strength to the monarchy, while its universal levy over every hide in the realm must have strengthened the national feeling.

The hus-carls.

To these two main bases of the royal power, a permanent administration and a fixed revenue, Cnut added a third even more directly important engine of government in the institution of the hus-carls. The tendency to provincial isolation, the temptation of the ealdormen to sheer off into independent princes, remained as strong as in Æthelred's day. But now for the first time the king had an armed force ready at his call. The hus-carls whom Cnut retained as a body-guard when he sent home the bulk of his Danish host, three or six thousand men as they were, were too few to hold the land against a national revolt. But they were a force strong enough to repress local rebellion; they furnished a disciplined nucleus for the fyrd to gather round; in the field they gave the king a new position as general among

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his warring lieutenants; and in more tranquil times they raised him high above the local governors, who had no force save the hasty levy of shire and province at their call. The strength which was given to the French crown by its "archers" in days long after was given to the English crown by the hus-carls. Continued by Cnut's successors to the Norman Conquest, imitated by the Norman kings in the "paid knights" who held themselves at the king's call, it was in great part to their existence that the new tranquillity which from this time characterized England must have been due.

Cnut and the Church

Still more significant of Cnut's temper than his development of the existing civil organization of the realm, were his dealings with the Church. His aim seemed to be not only to wipe away the memory of the stern deeds by which he had won his throne, but to identify himself even with the patriotism which had withstood the stranger. The saints he honoured were saints who had won martyrdom at the hands of the Danes. Eadmund of East-Anglia was the martyr of the early Danish conquest, and Cnut refounded the abbey which had grown up over his tomb. Archbishop Ælfheah was the martyr of the later Danish conquest, when the host of Thurkill harried the land; and Cnut followed the saint's body in its translation to Canterbury.[1] On the hill of Assandun the

[1] In 1023. (A. S. G.)

king built a church[1] which commemorated alike the men who had fallen in fight for him, and those who had fallen in fight for Eadmund; while with a still more marked intent he made his way in later days as a pilgrim to Glastonbury that he might spread a gorgeous pall over Eadmund's tomb.[2] The religious houses of Ely and Ramsey, the resting-places of Englishmen slain at Maldon and Assandun, were especially enriched by his gifts; and the names of Dunstan and Eadward the Martyr were honoured by the anniversaries he instituted in their memory. Nor were these acts of Cnut's mere stratagems to break the nation's discontent at a stranger's rule. They were the signs of a settled policy, and of a policy which sprang from the temper of the king. Scarcely had the Danish kingdom fallen to him when he began to carry out the same work there. English priests were sent to fill the Danish bishoprics; even Roeskilde by Lethra, the old royal seat of the first Danish kings, received its bishop from England consecrated by an English primate. Indeed the change which had turned Normans into Frenchmen, and men of the Dane-law into Englishmen, was seen working with a startling suddenness in Cnut himself. He had the northman's gift of adaptation, the gift of absorbing the character and fashions of the men

[1] Begun in 1020, finished in 1032. (A. S. G.)
[2] In 1032. (A. S. G.)

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about him; and in him the change was made the easier by his youthfulness. Within the young king's heart indeed the wild passions of the North slumbered rather than died. In his own fatherland, on his own native seas, if northern legend may be trusted, they leapt into fresh life. The Cnut of the Sagas is to the last the Cnut of the wars with Eadmund, vigorous, unscrupulous, passionate, revengeful, thirsty of blood. But the wild mood was hushed on English ground. The traditions, the songs which told of him in after time to Englishmen, were peaceful, gentle, even familiar in tone. "Merrily sang the monks in Ely as Cnut King rowed by," runs a verse of one of these songs which has floated down to us across the ages to tell how the music-loving king bade his men row near one of his favourite religious houses, "Row, cnihtes, near the land, and hear we these monks sing."

Peace of the land.

Cnut's greatest gift to his people was that of peace. All fear of the pirates was henceforth at an end. The Dane was no longer an enemy. Danish fleets no longer hung off the coasts. On the contrary, it was English ships and English soldiers who now followed Cnut in his northern wars. With him began the long internal tranquillity which was from this time to be the special note of our national history. For seventeen years the country rested in profound repose. There were troubles indeed in the Welsh marches; and a raid of the Scots wrought evil in Northumbria.

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But with these slight exceptions the land was untroubled from without. The absence of discontent is proved by the quiet of the country during the long periods of Cnut's absence in the North in the latter part of his reign. Such an internal tranquillity came no doubt in great measure from the exhaustion of the country, from that craving for peace and order which follows on long periods of anarchy, and which gives a new strength to the crown. But the temper, the greatness of Cnut, must have counted for much. The tendency to a semi-feudalism which had baffled Æthelred was held sternly down. The murder of Eadric showed how ruthlessly Cnut meant to deal with any attempt at independence, while in the banishment of Eric and Thurkill it was seen that the new earls held their posts solely at the king's will. The political instinct of Cnut too trusted to something more than personal dread; for in the efficiency of the hus-carls he found a ready and irresistible means of enforcing the common decisions of the government.

Cnut's temper.

But behind the material forces by which the power of the crown was guarded, and breathing life into the strict fulfilment of his pledge to rule according to the laws of the English kings, was Cnut's own resolve to govern rightly. In him, as in Ælfred, we are able to reach to the very heart of the man by the fortune which has preserved to us the king's own words. After ten years of rule he addressed his people from the foreign land

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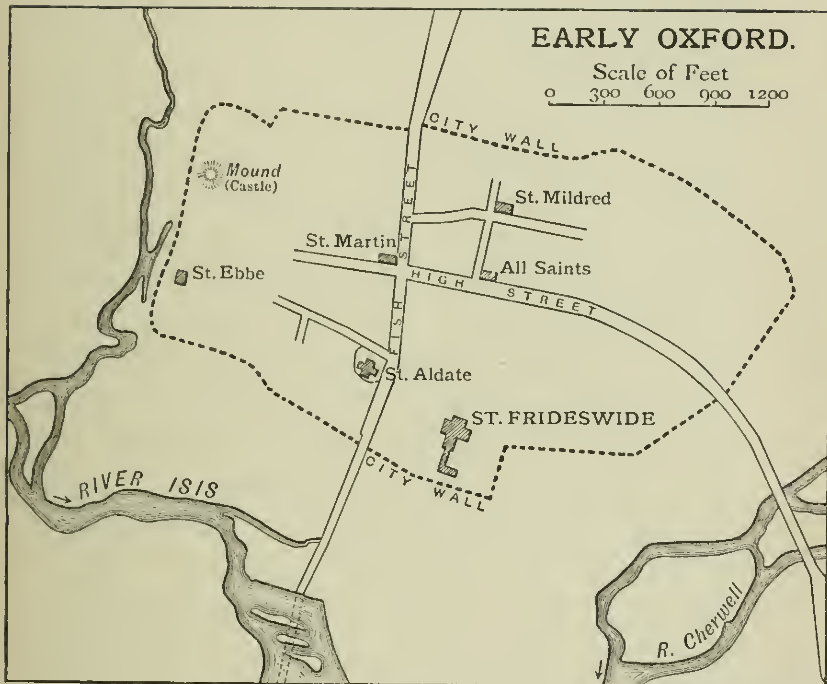
where he was then in pilgrimage, in a letter memorable as the first personal address of an English king to Englishmen which has reached us, but even more memorable for the light it throws on the simple grandeur of his character and the noble conception he had formed of kingship. "I have vowed to God to lead a right life in all things," he wrote, "to rule justly and piously my realms and subjects, and to administer just judgment to all. If heretofore I have done aught beyond what was just, through headiness or negligence of youth, I am ready with God's help to amend it utterly." No royal officer, either for fear of the king or for favour to any, is to consent to injustice; none is to do wrong to rich or poor "as they prize my friendship and their own welfare." He especially denounces unjust exactions: "I have no need that money be heaped together for me by unjust demands." "I have sent this letter before me," ends the young king—he was still little more than thirty—"that all the people of my realm may rejoice in my welldoing; for as you yourselves know, never have I spared nor will I spare to spend myself and my toil in what is needful and good for my people."

Oxford.

One of the most important results of the long peace under Cnut, and of the new connexion with the Scandinavian countries which was brought about by his rule, was the development of English trade and commerce. As yet indeed the


EARLY OXFORD.
Scale of Feet
0 300 600 900 1200
CITY WALL
Mound
(Castle)
St. Mildred
St. Martin
FISH STREET
All Saints
St. Ebbe
HIGH STREET
St. Aldate
ST. FRIDESWIDE
CITY WALL
RIVER ISIS
R. Cherwell
Walker & Boutall sc.

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inland trade of the country was very small. The rivers were its roads, and it was along the rivers that the trading towns for the most part sprang up. But though the Thames was already a waterway by which London could communicate with the heart of England, no town save Oxford had as yet arisen along its course. The name of the place tells the story of its birth. At a point where the Thames suddenly bends for a while to the south, and just before its waters are swollen by those of the Cherwell, a wide and shallow reach of the river offered a ford by which the cattle-drovers from Wessex could cross the stream, and traversing the marshy fields which edged it, mount the low slope of a gravel spit between the two rivers that formed the site of the latter city. On this slope a house of secular canons had grown up by the close of the ninth century round the tomb of a local saint, Fritheswith or Frideswide; and at the point where the road, reaching its summit, broke into three branches, to run northward, eastward, and westward, a little town furnished the germ of the future Oxford. It probably extended only over the site of three of its later parishes, that of St. Martin, whose claims to be the earliest of its churches were confirmed by its recognition as the "city church" and by the meeting of the Portmannimot in its churchyard;[1] that of St.

[1] A charter (Hist. Mon. Abingdon (ed. Stevenson), i. 439) shows the church to be older than Cnut's day.

Mildred,[1] whose name shows its Mercian date; and the parish of All Hallows between them; while it was linked to the ford by a thin line of houses, the later Fish Street, with a church of St. Aldad or Aldate in the midst of it. The little borough was probably extending its bounds to the westward over the ground marked by the parish of St. Ebbe[2] when Ælfred established his mint there; and the presence of a mint shows that it was already a place of some importance. The loss of London and of the lower Thames valley in the Danish wars had in fact made it a border-town of the Mercian ealdormanry after the peace of Wedmore; and the mound upon which its castle-keep was afterwards reared may have been among the first of those works of fortification by which Æthelred and his Lady held their own against the Danes. As from this time it grew in importance and wealth, Oxford divided with London the traffic along the Thames: we catch our first glimpse of its burghers when an abbot of Abingdon, in return for a toll of herrings which their barges paid in passing, consented to cut a new channel for their transit.[3]

[1] The site of this parish is now covered by Lincoln and Exeter colleges. Mildred, who died towards the close of the seventh century, was niece of Wulfhere of Mercia, and one of the most noted of the old English saints. (A. S. G.)

[2] As Ebbe was martyred in 870, the churches of her dedication generally mark the revival under Ælfred and his children, and so their parishes may be assigned to this time.

[3] Hist. Abingdon (Stevenson), i. 481, "Nam illorum navigium sæpius transitum illic habebat."

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Nottingham.

What Oxford had become to the trade of the Thames, Torksey and Nottingham were becoming to the trade of the Trent. Nottingham, where Eadward's bridge spanned the river, while his two mounds commanded its banks, was growing into importance not merely as a point of contact between England and the north, but as a centre of internal navigation. The town was still a small one, with but two churches, one on either side the river, and its life was purely industrial, for no abbey towered over its lanes, nor was the rock that overhung it crowned yet with its castle. To keep open the two highways by land and by water that intersected at this point was the main duty of the burghers; they were bound to guard alike "the water of the Trent" and "the foss and road that leads to York." A fine of eight pounds punished any one who ploughed or trenched within two perches of the road, or hindered in any way the passage of boats along the stream.[1] Tolls for the river traffic formed part of the revenues of the town, and the existence of a merchant-gild side by side with its cnichten-gild showed its trading activity.

Gloucester.

In the richer and busier valley of the Severn, where fisheries were now of great value, for at least sixty-five are mentioned in charters along its course,[2] Gloucester was fast rising into importance.

[1] See the description of the town in Domesday Book, and its charter.—Stubbs, "Select Charters," 159.

[2] There were at least thirty-three on the Wye. The salmon fisheries of these rivers were already leased.—Cod. Dip. 695.

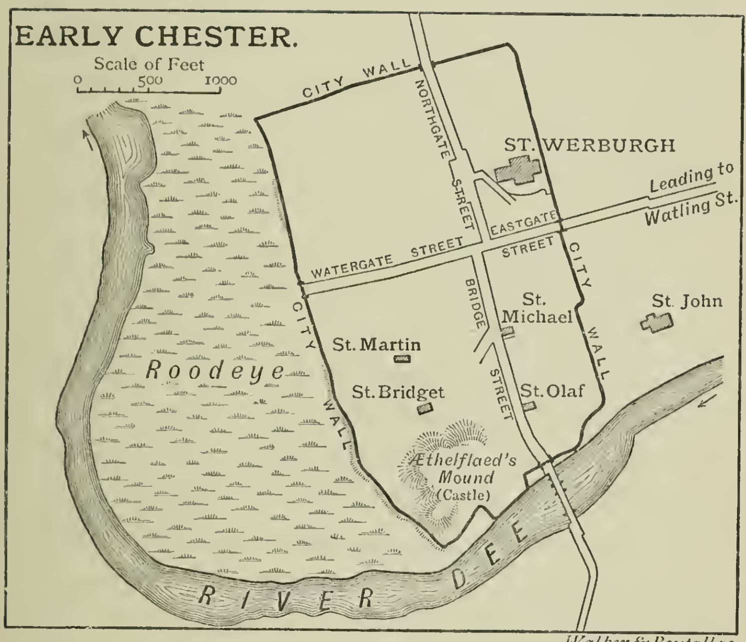
The foundation of a nunnery there in 681 showed that life had even in the seventh century returned to the ruins of the Roman Glevum, and in the time of Ælfred the town was already of sufficient note for him to establish a mint there. In later days the nunnery gave place to a college of secular priests, and that again under Cnut to a Benedictine abbey. But besides its religious life the position of Gloucester was rapidly giving to the town an increasing political importance. Lying as it did in the border-land between the two races, in a territory where the Welsh blood and the Welsh tongue were still common, Gloucester was destined in the following reign to become one of the state-towns of the realm. As yet however Worcester, as the dwelling-place of ealdorman and bishop, retained its supremacy; and the gift of its market dues, wain-shilling and load-penny, was the costliest among the many boons which Æthelred and Æthelflæd showered on Bishop Werfrith.

Chester.

Small however as were the beginnings of English trade, it had begun, and a survey of the seaports will show how much it owed to the impulse of the Danes. The port of Chester depended on the trade with Ireland, which had sprung up since the settlement of the northmen along the Irish coasts. The town—as we know—was one of the most recent in Britain; for its site had lain waste for three hundred years before Æthelflæd in 907 restored and enlarged its Roman

walls, raised the mound beside its bridge, and created the new Chester which like its predecessor watched alike the country to the north, and the Welsh passes to the south and westward of the river. It was probably to aid in its repeopling that the secular house of the Mercian saint, Werburgh,[1] was founded in the north-eastern quarter of the city, while its security was provided for by a custom recorded in Domesday, which bound every hide in the shire to furnish a man at its town-reeve's call to repair walls and bridge. The new town probably grew up by degrees over the ruins of the old: St. Werburgh's house stood alone in the north-eastern quarter, and the absence of any older churches in the north-western makes it possible that at first only the southern part of the city, as was likely from its neighbourhood to the bridge, was built over, for here we find on either side of the street leading to the bridge the churches of St. Martin, St. Bridget, and St. Michael; while yet more to the south the church of St. Olaf pointed, like the twelve lawmen who

[1] Indications of the growth of population in towns may be found in the provision of new churches, dedicated to saints in popular favour at the time. The conversion of the English kingdoms gave rise in the seventh century to a number of saints, as for example St. Wilfrid, St. Werburgh, St. Mildred, St. Etheldreda, etc. Saints such as St. Swithin, St. Eadmund, and St. Ebbe in the ninth century marked the early period of the West-Saxon monarchy, as St. Dunstan and St. Ælfheah marked its later period. The northern saints of the eleventh century, St. Olaf and St. Magnus, only just preceded the influx of Norman saints to whom so many later churches were dedicated. (A. S. G.)



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presided in its law-court, to a Danish settlement, the result perhaps of a Danish occupation of the city in the later course of the struggle between the Danelaw and the English kings.

Its trade.

Chester lay in a wild and half-barbarous region: the country round it, like most of northern England,[1] was almost destitute of wheat and grain,[2] and formed a vast pasture land, whose inhabitants differed little in their mode of life from their Welsh neighbours across the Dee. Their main food was barley-bread or oat-cake. Only the richer ate meat, the bulk contented themselves with milk and cheese.[3] But in spite of such a neighbourhood the town grew fast; and the legend which makes it the scene of Eadgar's triumph, when he was rowed upon the Dee by vassal kings, and knelt with them about him in the church of St. John without its walls, shows at any rate its importance in Dunstan's day. Its position indeed was as valuable commercially as it was politically; and its market-place offered one of the wildest and most picturesque scenes of the new commercial life. Among the piles of cheeses which then, as now, formed the main produce of the Cheshire plain, the piles of bannock and barley-bread, and the crates of fish which the fish-wives brought from the fisheries of the Dee, its sturdy burghers pushed their way through a motley crowd, in

1 Will. Malm. "Gest. Pontif." (Migne), 308.
2 "Farris et maxime tritico inops" (*ibid.*).
3 Will. Malm. "Gest. Pontif." (Migne), 308.

which the trader from the Danish towns of Ireland strove in his northern tongue to draw buyers to his gang of slaves, while the Welsh kerne, wrapped in his blanket, who had driven across the bridge the small and wiry cattle from his native hills, chattered as he might with the hardly less wild Cumbrian from the lands beyond the Ribble.

Bristol.

Whatever part the slave trade played in the commerce of Chester, it was the main traffic of Bristol. The rise of Bristol had been probably as recent as that of its rival port on the western coast; a number of coins,[1] indeed, which witness to the presence of a mint here in Cnut's day, form the first historic evidence of the existence of the town itself, though the presence of a parish of St. Mildred within its bounds suggests an earlier life in Mercian days. The trade with southern Ireland, from which its importance sprang, originated at any rate with the planting of Danish towns on the Irish coast, and the rise of Bristol into commercial activity cannot have been earlier than that of Dublin or Waterford. For a trade with Ireland the estuary of the Severn was the natural entrepot, and the deep channel of the Avon furnished a port at that point of the estuary from

[1] Mr. John Evans writes to me that he has in his collection four coins of Cnut struck at Bristol by the moneyers Ægelwine and Ælfwine. Hildebrand describes thirty-two varieties of Cnut's coins struck at Bristol which are now in the Stockholm Museum. In the same collection is one coin of Æthelred the Second minted by ÆLFPERD ON BRIE—, of which Mr. Evans has also a specimen. (A. S. G.)

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whence roads led most easily into the heart of Britain. The town however was still a small one in the days of the Confessor,[1] nor was its general traffic probably as yet of much consequence. But nowhere was the slave trade so active. The Bristol burgher bought up men over the whole face of England for export to Ireland, where the Danes, as elsewhere, acted as factors for the slave markets of half Europe. Youths and maidens were above all the object of their search; and in the market of the town rows of both might be seen chained and roped together for the mart. With a yet viler greed, the girls were hired out for purposes of prostitution as well as of sale, and often sold in a state of pregnancy.[2] It was in vain that canon and law forbade that Christian guiltless men should be sold out of the land, and above all to heathen purchasers, or that this prohibition was repeated in the laws of Cnut.[3] It was easy indeed to evade such enactments. The man who had been reduced to slavery by sentence of law, or the children who inherited his taint of blood, could not be held as the guiltless persons mentioned in it; and no English law would be

[1] It was coupled with the manor of Barton in a joint payment of a hundred and ten marks of silver as "feorm" to the royal exchequer, as though it had grown out of this manor at but a recent time (see entry in Domesday). It seems as yet to have been an open borough; its castle was certainly of far later date.

[2] Malmesbury, "Vit. Wulstani," Angl. Sacr. 258.

[3] Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 377-379.

made to apply to slaves either purchased or taken in war from the neighbouring Welsh.

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Sea-ports of the south coast.

While the trade with the Irish Ostmen was thus raising Chester and Bristol into importance, the towns of the English Channel continued little more than fishing towns. Exeter perhaps may have carried on some slight traffic with the land of the Franks. The town stood two miles above the mouth of the Exe, but shallow as its channel seems nowadays, the small craft of the town could easily moor beneath its walls, and the part it played in the after war with the Normans shows that it had grown into a strong and wealthy place. But eastward of Exeter we see only a trace of little ports to which the fisheries were beginning to give life. Of those on the Dorsetshire coast Wareham was the most thriving; it was the shire-town, with a house for the king when he came there on his ridings, a dwelling for the shire-reeve, and inns for all the leading thegns of the shire; but like its fellow towns it had hardly risen to the dignity of really civic existence, it had never bought its "feorm," and each of its burghers paid his dues either directly or through his lord to the king's reeve. Further westward Hamton and Portsmouth are but names to us, and it is only when we reach the Kentish coast that we find a real commercial life in Sandwich and Dover. Dover had long been the point of passage for Gaul; and on the silting up of the channel between Thanet and Kent, Sandwich

had risen from a little hamlet on the sandy flats beside the ruined Richborough, into the main port of the Channel. Its "butsecarls" were present in the fleets that the kings gathered in the Channel;[1] its ferry-dues and port-tolls formed a good part of the revenue of Christ-Church at Canterbury, to which Cnut granted them in later days;[2] they were rich enough indeed to tempt the greed of his son,[3] and to draw the two great Kentish abbeys into a long strife for their possession. But in spite

[1] In 1009 Æthelred gathered his fleet there. Tostig took "butsecarls" or sailors from it, doubtless as the best mariners of the coast.

[2] Cod. Dip. 737. Cnut grants to Christ-Church the port and all the "exitus" of its waters, amongst them the right of "wreck" or "strand," so far as a man can throw from a ship fully laden and floating in the river "securis parvula quam Angli vocant Taper-eax super terram," and on the high seas outside the harbour as far as high-water mark, and beyond this the length of a man's stature as he holds a sprouting branch in his hand and stretches it as far out as he can, "tenentis lignum quod Angli nominant spreot et tendentis ante se quantum potest." All found on this "strand," be it clothes or net or arms or iron or gold or silver, went half to the finder and half to the monks.

[3] Cod. Dip. 758. "Harald the king caused Sandwich to be ridden about to his own hand:—and he kept it to himself well-nigh two herring-seasons." The rival house, St. Augustine, had a great longing for Sandwich, and strove to buy it of Harald or to make a compromise with the monks of Christ-Church. But it was in vain that Abbot Ælfstan of St. Augustine lowered his demands even "to a third penny of the tolls, and he to give the convent (of Christ-Church) ten pounds: they refused it altogether and said it was no use asking. . . . And when he could not get on in this war, he asked leave to make a wharf over against Meldthryth's acre opposite the ferry, but all the convent decidedly opposed this. . . . The Abbot Ælfstan set to with a great help, and let dig a great canal at Hypelles fleet, hoping that craft would lie there just as they did at Sandwich; however he got no good by it."

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of "the craft that lay at its wharf," its reckoning of time by "herring-seasons" shows that Sandwich was still a fishing town rather than a merchant port.

Trade of the east coast.

Along the eastern coast however the trade with the north which had followed in the wake of the Danish conquest was now arousing commerce into a far more vigorous life. "What do you bring to us?" the merchant is asked in an Old-English dialogue. "I bring skins, silks, costly gems, and gold," he answers, "besides various garments, pigment, wine, oil, and ivory, with brass, and copper, and tin, silver and glass, and such like."[1] The main trade with the Wash or the Humber was probably of rougher wares than these, the skins and ropes and ship masts which, at a later day, formed the staple of the Baltic trade in the hands of the Hanse towns, and above all the iron and steel that the Scandinavian lands so long supplied to Britain. The herring fishery in the German Sea had long been a lucrative branch of employment among the northern peoples; and as this was already absorbing the boats of Dover and Sandwich, we cannot doubt that it formed as large a part of the business of the eastern ports. With the growing rigidity of the ecclesiastical rules for fasting and abstinence the supply of fish as an article of diet became every day a more

[1] Quoted from MS. Tib. A. 3, in Sharon Turner, "Hist. Ang. Sax." iii. 100.

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important matter. The inland-fisher supplied eels, and lampreys, minnows and eel-pouts, from rivers and fish-ponds; the sea-fisher brought herrings and salmon, skate and haddocks, porpoises, sturgeons, oysters and crabs, mussels, winkles, cockles, flounders, plaice, and lobsters, as the harvest of the sea.[1] With the whale fishery of the northern ocean, which was to bring wealth in later days to the Humber, the English seaman, if we may trust a representation of the time, was too timid to meddle. "Can you take a whale?" asks his questioner. "Many," he answers, "take whales without danger, and then they get a great price, but I dare not from the fearfulness of my mind."[2]

Its sea-ports.

But Dane and Norwegian were traders over a yet wider field than the northern seas;[3] their barks entered the Mediterranean, while the overland route through Russia brought the silks and gold-work of Constantinople and the East to their Eastland traders; and the tempting list of wares

[1] Ælfric's Dialogues in the Cotton Library MS. Tib. A. 3; quoted in Sharon Turner, "Hist. Ang. Sax." iii. 20.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 22.

[3] As early as Harald Fair-hair's time, his son Biorn "ruled over Westfold, and generally lived at Tunsberg, and went but little on war expeditions. Tunsberg at that time was much frequented by merchant vessels, both from the Wik and the north country, and also from the south, from Denmark and from Saxon-land. King Biorn had also merchant ships on voyages to other lands, by which he procured himself costly goods and such things as he thought needful, and so his brothers called him 'the Freightman' and 'the Merchant.'"—Harald Fair-hair's Saga, Laing, "Sea Kings," i. 305.

which the merchant describes in Ælfric's dialogue may have fairly represented what the northmen brought to their markets at Grimsby or York. The growth of this northern trade at any rate is shown by the growth of the ports along the eastern coast. Ipswich was becoming a considerable town with some five hundred houses and between two and three thousand inhabitants; Dunwich too, though even then threatened by the sea, was growing fast. But neither could vie in size or wealth with Norwich. Its site at the confluence of the Wensum with the Yare, at the highest point to which the tidal water then penetrated, could not fail to call to the town population and traffic; and the wealth and daring of its six or seven thousand inhabitants soon became proverbial. Many of these were probably Danes; and the town gave an odd proof of its connexion with the Scandinavian lands by paying, as Domesday tells us, among its yearly dues to the king, "a bear, and six dogs for the bear-baiting." The merchants of Lincoln were also closely linked with the north; a Norwegian king indeed, on the eve of an expedition, could leave his treasure in the hands of one of them. No bishop's minster or earl's castle as yet crowned the hill-top of Lincoln; but the increase of trade was already drawing its long steep street down the slope, at whose foot the Witham breaks through the upland to the flats of the Wash. In those flats Boston

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was growing up round the abbey of St. Botulf, to depose Lincoln as Hull deposed York, when the increasing size of vessels made the Witham and Ouse impassable for traffic. But as yet the tiny commerce needed only vessels that drew little water; and Lincoln, with its merchant gild and its twelve lawmen ruling the city sokes, was a mart of both inland and outland trade.[1]

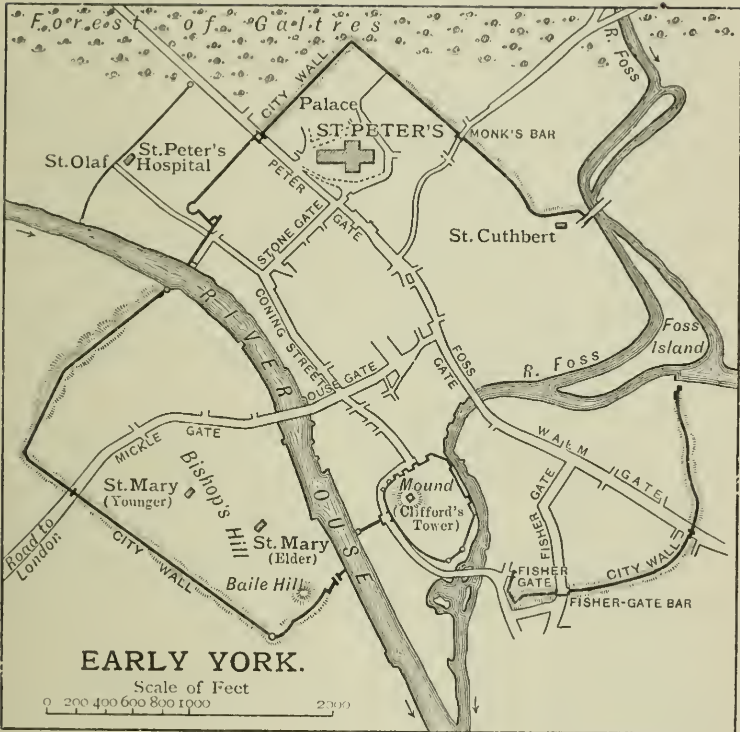
York.

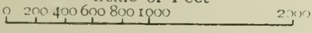
The centre however of the northern trade was York. In the days of Dunstan[2] much of its Roman glory still lingered on in noble buildings and massive walls, even then crumbling with age; but its later fortunes under Engle and Dane were marked by the mound which rose on the tongue of land at the junction of Foss and Ouse, a mound which had probably been raised in the early Northumbrian days to command the port, and on which the northern conquerors of York had planted a fortress, whose demolition by Æthelstan announced the subjection of the Danelaw,[3] and whose site is now marked by the ruined fortress of yet later days called Clifford's Tower. The city was proud of its population and wealth. It boasted of thirty thousand dwellers; it really contained some two thousand houses and about ten thousand inhabitants, a number far beyond

[1] "Emporium hominum terra marique venientium."—Will. Malm. "Gest. Pontificum" (Hamilton), p. 312.

[2] Life of Oswald (Raine), "Hist. of Church of York," p. 454, etc.

[3] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 213.





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that of any other English town save London.[1] The city indeed now not only filled the wedge-like space between the Foss and the Ouse, but stretched to south-east and south-west over both rivers in considerable suburbs. Across the Ouse houses gathered thickly round the two churches of St. Mary, Bishop's Hill, in the fabric of one of which we find fragments of the Roman work with which this part of York abounds, while across the Foss the fishers gathered in their own Fisher-gate. A third suburb along the Ouse is marked as a Danish quarter by the later church of St. Olaf and by Siward's choice of a burial-place there; and here no doubt mainly centred the trade and wealth of the town.[2]

London.

From the first upgrowth of commerce, however, the centre of the whole trading life of England was London. Its early history is lost in obscurity. We know nothing of the circumstances of its conquest, of the fate of its citizens, or of the settlement of the conquerors within its walls. That some such settlement had taken place at least as early as the close of the seventh century

[1] "Gaudet de multitudine populorum, non minus virorum ac mulierum, exceptis parvulis et pubetinis, quam xxx. milia in eadem civitate numerati sunt."—Life of Oswald, p. 454. Strictly construed, this would mean some fifty or sixty thousand dwellers; but either number is absurd. Domesday gives 1418 houses for five of its "shires" and one "shire" waste, with 189 for the archbishop's "shire."

[2] "Inedicibiliter repleta est, et mercatorum gazis locupleta qui undique adveniunt, maxime ex Danorum gente."—Life of Oswald (Raine), "Hist. Ch. of York," i. 454.

is plain from the story of Mellitus, when placed as bishop within its walls; but it is equally plain that the settlement was an English one, that the provincials had here as elsewhere disappeared, and that the ruin of the city had been complete. Had London merely surrendered to the East-Saxons and retained its older population and municipal life, it is hard to imagine how, within less than half a century, its burghers could have so wholly lost all trace of Christianity that not even a ruined church, as at Canterbury, remained for the use of the Christian bishop, and that the first care of Mellitus was to set up a mission-church in the midst of a heathen population. It is even harder to imagine how all trace of the municipal institutions to which the Roman towns clung so obstinately should have so utterly disappeared. But more direct proofs of the wreck of the town meet us in the stray glimpses which we are able to get of its earlier topographical history. The story of early London is not that of a settled community slowly putting off the forms of Roman for those of English life, but of a number of little groups scattered here and there over the area within the walls, each growing up with its own life and institutions, gilds, sokes, religious houses, and the like, and only slowly drawing together into a municipal union which remained weak and imperfect even at the Norman conquest.

Unluckily it is only here and there that we

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Early Saxon settlement.

can even dimly trace the growth of these little communities. The first which we can clearly follow is that of the church and monastery of St. Paul. The ground which Æthelberht gave Bishop Mellitus for his minster and its accompanying buildings, ground which formed the highest point in the city, and whose area corresponds with that of the present precinct of the cathedral-church, was no doubt a spot waste and uninhabited, and thus formed part of the folk-land which was at the king's disposal.[1] But from other indications we may gather that not this spot only, but the whole area about it, was waste and uninhabited. To the north of St. Paul's, for instance, the ground on which St. Martin's-le-Grand was planted seems from the rise of this great church there to have been mainly open ground at the eve of the Norman conquest, while to the westward it was still easy for the Franciscans to find room for their settlement as late as the thirteenth century. The space south of the precincts was chiefly occupied in later days by the soke of Castle Baynard, a fortress with which the Norman kings bridled the city on the westward, as they bridled it to the east with the Tower,[2] and which was probably

[1] The bounds of the grant were probably much the same as those of the present precincts, with Old Change to the eastward, Pater-noster Row to the north, Ave-Maria Lane and Creed Lane to the west, and Carter Lane to the south.

[2] The soke of Castle Baynard comprised the whole district round the precincts of St. Paul's from Benet's Lane to the Wall, and northward as far as Ludgate.

EARLY LONDON.
Moor Fields
CRIPPLE GATE
HOLEBOURN BRIDGE
ALDERS GATE
Offa's Vill.
WATLING ST.
WEST GATE OR NEW GATE
ALDERMANBURY
Basing's Shaw
LOTHBURY
Walbrook
St. Botolph
BISHOP'S GATE
Old Roman Gate
St. Ethelburga
Ermine Street
Place of Meeting of The Folkmote
CHEAPSIDE
THE CHEAP
St. Faith
St. Paul
St. Gregory
St. Augustine
St. Mildred
St. Mildred
Old Line
St. Mary Aldermary
BUCKLERSBURY
POULTRY
CORNHILL
St. Peter Cornhill
Lang Bourn
St. Dionis Backchurch
FENCHURCH ST.
St. Botolph
ALD GATE
Fleet River
LUDGATE
ST BENETS
LA
St. Benet
St. Peter
OLD FISH ST.
BUDGE ROW
St. Swithin
Watling Street
EAST CHEAP
Old Line of Ermine Street
St. Olave
St. Dunstan
Allhallows Barking
Pauls Wharf
Queenhithe
DOW GATE
St. Magnus
RIVER THAMES
LONDON BRIDGE
BILLINGSGATE
Scale of Feet
0 250 500 1000 2000
St. Olave
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built, like the Tower itself, on open ground which may have been only recently won from the foreshore of the river. The waste state of the ground has left its mark even on the little lane now known as St. Benet's, which stretches along the borders of this soke from Paul's Chain to Paul's Wharf. As one of the first needs for the fringe of population which would naturally grow up around the precincts was that of access to the river, this lane can hardly have been later in growth than the close of the eighth century, and formed a part of the bishop's liberty; but as neither this liberty, nor the parish of St. Benet's, which ecclesiastically represented it, extended much beyond the lane itself, we may conjecture that it ran through a district which was at this time unoccupied.

Growth of population.

The settlement about St. Paul's however was far from being as early as the age of Mellitus, for the work of that missionary was interrupted by the apostasy of the East-Saxons, and it is not till half a century later, when London had passed under the Mercian rule[1] that we again find bishops settled there. The most famous of these is Erkenwald,[2] and it is to him and his immediate successors that we must attribute the little ring of churches and parishes—such as St. Augustine, St.

[1] Wulfhere of Mercia sold its bishoprick to Wini in 666.—Bæda, H. E. lib. iii. c. 7.

[2] Bæda, H. E. lib. iv. c. 6. He became bishop in 675 or 676, and died about 693.—Stubbs, art. on "Erkenwald" in "Dict. Christ. Biogr." ii. 178.

Gregory, St. Benet, and St. Faith[1]—which show a growth of population round the precincts of the minster. The legend of Erkenwald for the first time brings us face to face with the new burghers, in their struggle with the monks of Chertsey and the nuns of Barking, at whose house he had died, for the possession of the sainted bishop's remains. They broke into the death-chamber, runs the legend, seized the corpse, and set it in a waggon drawn by oxen to carry it to the city. Their torches, however, were blown out by a mighty storm, they could not ford the swollen waters of the Lea, nor find boats to cross it, and a fresh strife rose over the remains, which only ended in both parties praying for a miracle to decide between them. At their prayers the waters parted and suffered the waggon to pass through, the torches re-lighted themselves, the storm ceased, and the burghers brought the body of their saint in triumph into London.[2] About the same time, in the reign of Wulfhere's successor, Æthelred, we catch the first indication of a revival of the trade

[1] The dedications to St. Augustine and St. Gregory bear evidence of close association with the conversion of England. St. Benet's or St. Benedict's recalls the fact that it was during Erkenwald's episcopate that the Benedictine rule first began to make its way in England. St. Faith was a favourite early dedication. (A. S. G.)

[2] We may perhaps find a trace of Erkenwald in the church of All Hallows, Barking, in the neighbourhood of the Tower. Erkenwald was the founder of the monastery at Barking, and the church and parish may mark the locality of a soke or manor which he had granted to it.

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and foreign commerce of the town in its mention as a mart for slaves, and the presence there of merchants from Frisia:[1] while towards the close of the seventh century its "wic reeve" is mentioned in the laws of the Kentish kings.[2]

The Cheap.

If we look for the site of the early community to which reeve and market and burgesses belonged, tradition takes us to the district afterwards known as the Ward of Cheap as the oldest part of London. Nor is the tradition at variance with the indications of the ground itself. Nowhere was life so likely to awake again as along the banks of the Walbrook, then and for centuries to come a broad river-channel, between whose muddy banks the stream was still deep enough to float the small boats used in the traffic up from the Thames to the very edge of the "Cheap," or market-place at the hythe or port which tradition fixed in the modern Bucklersbury.[3] But that the space between this border of the Cheap and the minster precincts was already fairly peopled by the close of the eighth century we may gather from the site of two of the churches within this area. From the days of Wulfhere to those of Ecgberht, London, save for its temporary subjection to the West-Saxon rule by Ine, remained under the rule of the Mercian

[1] Bæda, H. E. lib. iv. c. 22.

[2] "Laws of Hlothere and Eadric."—Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 35.

[3] Stow's "London" (ed. Thoms), p. 97. Cheapward runs along the Walbrook from Bucklersbury to the Poultry.

kings, one of the greatest of whom, Offa, is traditionally said to have occupied a king's vill in what must have then been open ground to the north of the little borough we have been describing, at a spot now marked by St. Alban's church in Wood Street.[1] Mildred was a popular Mercian saint of the time: and if the two churches dedicated to her in Bread Street and in the Poultry be, as is likely, of this date, they would show that the space between the Cheap and the minster, from Fish Street on the south to our Cheapside on the north, had grown into a single borough before the days of Ecgberht.[2]

[1] In Abbot Paul's time, 1077-1093, the Abbey of St. Alban's acquired "plures ecclesias in Lundoniis, quarum unius donationem, scilicet Sancti Albani, pro patronatu alterius, nescitur qua consideratione Abbati Westmonasteriensi concessit. Fuit autem capella regis Offa, fundatoris, cui fuit continuum suum regale palatium. Sed incuriâ sequacium et desidiâ omnis locus ille, improbâ occupatione civium vicinorium, in parvum mansum, libertatem tamen antiquam retinentem, coartatur."—Hist. Mon. S. Albani (ed. Riley), vol. i. p. 55. That is, an old chapel, perhaps of Offa's king's-tun, was given to St. Alban's after the Conquest, and *then* made a church under the abbey-saint's name. Stow and the ordinary London historians blunder wildly about this. A grant of the last Mercian king, Burhred, of a "gaziferi agelluli in vico Lundoniæ, hoc est ubi nominatur Ceolmundingchaga, qui est non longe from (sic) Westgetum positus" (Thorpe, "Diplomatarium," p. 118), points to some dwellings about "Westgate," the "Newgate" of later days.

[2] That this early London grew up on ground from which the Roman city had practically disappeared may be inferred from the change in the main line of communication which passed through the heart of each. This was the road which led from Newgate to the Bridge. In Roman London this seems to have struck through the city in a direct line from Newgate to a bridge in the neighbourhood of the present Budge Row. Of this road the two extremities survived in English London, one from the gate to the precincts of St. Paul, the other in the

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East-Cheap.

The story of the eastern half of London is, in its earliest part, even more obscure than the story of the western half. The great central road from Newgate, which crossed Walbrook at the Poultry, stretches thence through its area to London Bridge; and a Cheap grew up, probably at a very early time, on the southern side of this road, the East-Cheap of later days, though far smaller and less important than the Cheap in the west. But this Cheap must at first have stood almost isolated;[1] it was only slowly that population spread over the space about it, and dwellings rose scantily and sporadically along the line of communication which led from the bridge over Walbrook to the various gates, and through these to the country beyond. It is thus as a place of traffic that London reappears in history. Its position indeed was such that traffic could not fail to re-create the town, for whether a bridge or a ferry existed at this time,[2]

present Budge Row. But between these points all trace of it is lost. The lines of the street that ran through the area which it must have traversed are not only not in accordance with it, but thrown diagonally across it. It is the same wherever we dig over the site of the ancient city; the remains of Roman London which we discover have little or no relation to the lines of the modern times.

[1] We see it however extending as early as the close of the eighth century, when Offa (Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 34, note) confirms a gift of two brothers to the church of S. Denys of a plot of ground "in portu qui nuncupatur Lunden-wick," in which we may probably see the origin of S. Dionis Backchurch at the south end of Lime Street just to north of the East-Cheap.

[2] The first historical proof of the existence of a bridge is in Eadgar's day, when a witch was drowned there. "Ða nam man ðæt wif, and ádrencte hí æt Lundenbricge."—Cod. Dip. 521.

it was here that the traveller from Kent or Gaul would still cross the Thames, and it was from London that the roads still diverged which, silent and desolate as they had become, furnished the means of communication to any part of Britain.[1] The same advantages of site, in a word, which had so rapidly drawn trade and population to the Roman Londinium would, though in a less degree, draw trade and population to the English London.[2]

Beginnings of municipal life.

Though its growth was for a while arrested by the early struggle with the northmen, a new life began for the city with its conquest by Ælfred. The most important part of his work was his restoration of its walls. Like the rest of the Roman town the walls themselves had fallen into such decay that they hardly formed any obstacle to an assailant; and it is thus that we hear of no opposition to its repeated occupation by the Danes. Their condition indeed is illustrated by the fact that the very position of the gates must have become in some cases uncertain; for the Bishopsgate which dates from this time is considerably to the east of the Roman gate which it represented. The security however which was given by these

[1] See "Making of England," vol. i. pp. 117, 118. (A. S. G.)

[2] The influence of the bishops on its early development should be noticed. Bishop Theodred in his will (Thorpe, "Diplomatarium," p. 512) calls himself "bishop of the Lundenwara," and this close association of bishop, minster, and town is seen in the gathering of the folk-moot at the eastern end of St. Paul's, summoned by its bell, as well as in the muster of the citizens in arms at the western.

walls, the new impulse derived from their rebuilding, and above all the peace and prosperity won by the great sovereigns who followed Ælfred, are seen in the rapid extension of London through the following century. The "eight moneyers" whom we find allotted to London by Æthelstan's laws show the position it already held for wealth and importance. Under Æthelstan too we find the first document which throws light upon its municipal and commercial life.[1] It is the record of a gild of a hundred burghers who with the sanction of the king and bishop organize themselves in groups of three, each with its head-man, the whole body being united under an ealdorman, with definite provisions for common meeting and common contributions, with a view to the enforcement of a rough police and self-government. The agreement constituting this frith-gild is drawn up by the bishops and reeves belonging to London, and confirmed by the pledges of the frith-gegildas. If this, as it seems, is the act of a voluntary association, we have in it the first indication of the way in which the new London was to be formed.[2] Frith-gilds such as this, church-sokes and lay-sokes, were growing up side by side at various points of

[1] The "Judicia Civitatis Lundoniæ."—Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. p. 229 *et seq.*

[2] "London, when it springs into historical light, is a collection of communities based on the lordship, the parish, and the gild; and there is no reason to doubt that similar coincident causes helped the growth of such towns as York and Exeter."—Stubbs, "Const. Hist." i. 107.

the area within the walls, each with its separate life and jurisdiction,[1] but all bound together by a common relation to the king's reeve, port-reeve, or wick-reeve, as well as by those beginnings of a true municipal life which are to be seen in the existence of a common Port-mannimot, or moot of the burghers from all parts of the city. That this municipal life was furthered by and closely connected with the bishops of the town was shown by the fact that this moot was called together by the bell from the bell-tower of St. Paul's, and that it met in the space within the precinct to the eastward of the church. Nor is it less remarkable that when the burghers gathered for purposes of war they mustered on the open space at the west end of the church, and marched under the banner of St. Paul.[2]

Growth of London.

It is only by conjecture that we can associate the gild with its ealdorman at its head, whose memory is preserved in the Dooms of Æthelstan, with the Cnichten-gild of Eadgar's day, out of which the later "merchant-gild" may have grown, or with the "lithsmen" who play so important a part in Cnut's day, and who seem to have conducted the inland traffic with Oxford and the towns along the Thames. Still more conjectural

[1] The twelve "lawmen, habentes sacam et socam," at Lincoln, Stamford, and Cambridge, show a like organization in other English towns. So at York, "in Eboraco civitate," says Domesday, "tempore regis Edwardi præter scyram Archiepiscopi fuerunt sex scyræ."

[2] Stow's "London" (ed. Thoms), p. 12.

perhaps is the connexion of this gild with the borough which grew up to the north of the earlier Lundon-burh, and which has left a trace of itself in the name of Aldermanbury, a name now lost in that of Cripple-gate ward. However this may be, it is probable that it is to this period that we must refer the beginnings of this Ealdorman-bury, as well as of the Loth-bury which lay on the banks of the Walbrook to the eastward, though the two boroughs were still parted from one another by a space which is now represented by Basing-hall ward, and were far from extending northward to the wall.[1] But to the eastward of the Walbrook London must have been increasing even more rapidly. While western London was growing into the borough between the Poultry and St. Paul's, eastern London seems still to have remained bare of dwellings save for the little group at its East-Cheap, and the houses which fringed the lanes that led from the Poultry to the Bishopsgate and the Bridge. The most important of these was probably that which led up Cornhill and along our Bishopsgate Street to the great manors of the bishops on the north of the city. As Cornhill was a bishop's soke, it is likely that the string of dwellings which came to creep up its ascent, with their church of St. Peter in the midst of them, were due originally to the needs

[1] The one monument on the west side of Walbrook which we can certainly assign to this period is the church of St. Swithun.

of this communication with the episcopal manors, while the bounds of the soke, as shown in those of the modern wards, prove it to have been originally a mere lane of houses, straggling, as we may suppose, through an otherwise untenanted area. Bishopsgate ward, which consists simply of that street with the houses on both sides of the road, still more clearly looks back to a time when the lane to the Gate was a mere double line of houses running through an area as yet unoccupied.

Growth of foreign trade.

But with the age of Eadgar came a time of rapid development which told yet more on eastern than on western London; for the trade which we find established in the regulations of Æthelred[1] must have grown up under his father's reign. The commerce with the north, which had come with the Danes, was backed by a trade with the Rhineland as well as by one with Normandy. "The men of Rouen," runs the Institute, "who came with wine and sturgeon, gave as dues six shillings for every big ship and the twentieth piece of every sturgeon. The men of Flanders, and Ponthieu, and Normandy, and France, showed their goods for sale and paid toll. So did the men of Hogge, and Liége, and Neville; and the Emperor's men, who came in their ships, were held worthy of good laws even as we." The seafaring vessels in which this trade was conducted, no longer able from their size to reach the hythe

[1] "De Institutis Lundoniæ."—Thorpe, "Anc. Laws," i. 300.

in the Walbrook, moored along the Thames itself at Billingsgate and Queenhythe, on whose rude wharves the laws show us piled a strange medley of goods: pepper and spices from the far East, crates of gloves and gray cloths, it may be from the Lombard looms, sacks of wool, the lowly forerunners of England's own great export in later days, iron-work from Liége, butts of French wine and of vinegar, and with them the rural products of the country itself—cheese, butter, lard, and eggs, with live swine and fowls. The influence of the port at Billingsgate was seen in the rapid peopling of eastern London. Houses must have been already clustering round the gates; and it is probable that the district just within the Ald-gate,[1] which was a soke in the twelfth century,[2] was already to some extent peopled by Eadgar's day. If the tradition of the Cnichten-gild, at any rate, is to be trusted, and if the district without the gate[3] then "desolate" from the Danish ravages was given to the gild as a soke by Eadgar,[4] this would date the beginning of buildings in this quarter and that of the church of St. Botulf, round which they clustered as "the head of the soke," in his reign. Just to the south of this district, and occupying the whole space between the East-Cheap and the Tower, is another large

[1] Now represented by its ward.
[2] When it was held by Queen Matilda.
[3] Our Portsoken ward.
[4] Stow's "London" (ed. Thoms), p. 46.

area now represented by Tower Ward. The church of All Hallows, Barking, near the south-eastern angle of this ward, may, as we have said, represent some slight gathering of people there on land belonging to that house at an earlier date, but the bulk of the area is divided between the parishes of St. Dunstan in the East and St. Olave's, Hart Street, and can therefore hardly have been peopled at an earlier time than the reign of Eadgar and Æthelred. If much of this sudden growth of London was due to the new trading energy, much was due to an actual settlement of Danes. Malmesbury indeed speaks of London as having become half-barbarized at this time by the abundance of its Danish inhabitants;[1] their influence is shown by the conversion of its Portmannimot into a "Husting"; while the churches of St. Magnus and St. Olave at either end of the Bridge suggest that the steep slope down to the river along which Thames Street runs on either side Walbrook, as well as the similar slope across the water, were both peopled by northmen at about this period. It is possible indeed that the district that lies between the present Thames Street and the river was only reclaimed in the days of Cnut; none of the dedications of the parishes in this region point to an earlier date.

The wealth which had been brought to London

[1] Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 318.

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Importance of London.

by this rapid development of trade may be estimated by the tribute demanded from it even in the first year of Cnut's reign; while the whole of England had to pay a Danegeld of seventy-two thousand pounds, the townsmen of London were taxed at ten thousand five hundred pounds. And with the upgrowth of commercial activity and wealth there had come, as we have seen, a new political importance which from the time of the later Danish wars London was never again to lose. Under Cnut it became not only the commercial but the military centre of the kingdom, and soon rose to be its political centre as well. When the King of the West-Saxons became finally in fact as well as in name King of all England, Winchester could no longer serve as the seat of the royal power, the capital of the larger state; and the new necessities of the time led to the rapid rise in political importance of London, whose position, commanding the highway of the Thames and the great lines of communication which struck from the chief port of the realm across the island, made it the natural centre of the English provinces, while it was no less fitted by position to become the centre of the great empire which Cnut was building up on either shore of the North Sea.

Cnut's pilgrimage.

The firm hold which Cnut had gained on England during the eight years which followed his coronation now left him free to turn to the affairs of his northern realm. He was already

master of Denmark. Norway however had risen in revolt in the same year as his conquest of England, 1015, and his nephew, Jarl Hakon, having been driven out, a native ruler, the famous St. Olaf, had mounted the throne. For a time Cnut took no measures of revenge, but remained firm to his policy of the consolidation of his power in England and Denmark. In 1025, however, the peace and security of his empire left him free to turn his thoughts to the assertion of his supremacy, and to make a formal demand for the submission of Norway. The mocking answer of Olaf was not followed at once by open war, but led to a train of negotiations in which the prudence and skill of Cnut showed themselves. While attempting to break the alliance between Sweden and Norway, and to spread disaffection and distrust among the Norwegians, he sought to strengthen his hold in Denmark itself by leaving as its ruler his son Harthacnut, a child of seven years old, in the charge of his brother-in-law, Ulf. His next step showed the large political conceptions which ruled his action. The Scandinavian kingdoms had up to this time lain outside the European commonwealth, the terror and scourge of Western Christendom. Heathenism still held its ground in the forests of the North, and the peoples of Europe saw in the pirates the deadly enemies alike of their civilization and of their religion. Cnut's first aim was by a decisive act on his own part to

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bring his northern kingdom into a new union with Christendom. He undertook a pilgrimage to Rome. As a West-Saxon king he was indeed but following in the steps of his predecessors for more than three hundred years past, but no Danish king or jarl had ever yet left the shores of Denmark as a pilgrim; and there was no longer any doubt as to the character which the young king meant to impress on the government of his northern realm when at twenty-six he set sail for Rome. From the moment of his landing on the coast of Flanders the political character of his journey was clearly marked, whether he turned aside to secure the friendship of Count Albert at Namur, or astonished Bishop Fulbert of Chartres by the wisdom and splendour of a king who had till now been in the eyes of Europe but a leader of heathen pirates. As he journeyed along the pilgrims' route, he secured by treaties with the masters of the Alpine passes safety for English merchants and travellers to the Papal City, and in Rome itself won from the Pope immunity from all tolls and taxes for the Saxon school which had grown up there.

His Northern Empire.

His political work was completed in the spring by his meeting at Rome with the Emperor Conrad, when the master of the two kingdoms of Denmark and England was strong enough to wring from the Emperor the restoration of the land beyond the Eider which had been seized by Otto the

Second, and to throw back the German frontier to that river; while a treaty was arranged for the future marriage of Cnut's daughter to the son of Conrad, afterwards the Emperor Henry III. But from his triumphant pilgrimage Cnut returned to fresh troubles at home. England indeed remained peaceful; but Denmark had revolted in favour of the child Harthacnut and the regent Ulf, and torn by civil strife was in no state to resist the combined attack with which it was threatened by Norway and Sweden. Cnut, however, backed by the steady loyalty of his English realm, and strengthened by the new naval power which it had developed in these years of prosperity, was able to make himself quickly master of Denmark and to repulse the invasion of the allied fleets; and in the following year, 1028, he sailed from England to Norway with fifty great ships, and drove King Olaf out of the land, over which he set his nephew, Hakon, as jarl. A last rising of the Norwegians against his power, in 1030, was at once stamped out, and till his death Norway owned his rule.

The Scottish kingdom.

Lord of three realms, Cnut could now turn to the last troubles that seemed to threaten him, and act as decisively on the borders of his English realm as in the northern seas. His power was shown by the ease with which he crushed difficulties that had hardly tried the resources of the earlier English kings. A rising of the Welsh had

been checked in the first years of his rule by the march of an army on St. David's, and among the last events of his reign we hear of the slaying of a Welsh prince by the English. These later years were marked too by his action in putting an end to the dangers which sprang from the new attitude of the Scottish kings. We have already seen how the political relations of the Scots with their southern neighbours had been affected by the action of the Danes. Pressed between the Norse jarls settled in Caithness and the Danelaw of central England, the Scot kings were glad to welcome the friendship of Wessex; but with the conquest by the house of Ælfred of the Danelaw, and the extension of the new English realm to their own southern border, their dread of English ambition became in its turn greater than their dread of the Dane. In the battle of Brunanburh, the Scot king Constantine fought side by side with the northmen against Æthelstan. Eadmund's gift of southern Cumbria showed the price which the English kings set upon Scottish friendship. The district was thenceforth held by the heir of the Scottish crown, and for a time at least, the policy of conciliation seems to have been successful, for the Scots proved Eadred's allies in his wars with Northumbria. But even as allies, they were still pressing southwards on the English realm. Across the Forth lay the English Lowlands, that northern Bernicia which had escaped the Danish settlement

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that changed the neighbouring Deira into a part of the Danelaw. It emerged from the Danish storm as English as before, with a line of native ealdormen who seem to have inherited the blood of its older kings. Harassed as the land had been, and changed as it was from the Northumbria of Bæda or Cuthbert, Bernicia was still a tempting bait to the clansmen of the Scottish realm.

Its winning of Northern Bernicia.

One important post was already established on Northumbrian soil. Whether by peaceful cession on Eadred's part or no, the border fortress of Edinburgh passed during his reign into Scottish hands. It is uncertain if the grant of Lothian by Eadgar followed the acquisition of Edinburgh; but at the close of his reign the southward pressure of the Scots was strongly felt. "Raids upon Saxony" are marked by the Pictish chronicle among the deeds of King Kenneth; and amidst the troubles of Æthelred's reign a Scottish host swept the country to the very gates of Durham. But Durham was rescued by the sword of Uhtred, and the heads of the slain marauders were hung by their long twisted hair round its walls. The raid and the fight were memorable as the opening of a series of descents which were from this time to form much of the history of the north. Cnut was hardly seated on the throne when in 1018 the Scot king, Malcolm, made a fresh inroad on Northumbria, and the flower of its nobles fell fighting round Earl Eadwulf in a battle at Carham on the

Tweed. For a time the blow passed unavenged; and it was not till 1031 that Cnut was forced by fresh outbreaks to march upon the Scots. The might of the great conqueror must have been overwhelming, for Malcolm submitted without a battle; but his pledge to become Cnut's "man" seems to have been part of a political arrangement by which the possession of his conquests was confirmed to the Scottish king, and by which the northern half of the old Northumbrian kingdom became henceforth part of the Scottish realm.

Its results.

Few gains have told more powerfully on the political character of a kingdom than this. King of western Dalriada, king of the Picts, lord of Cumbria, the Scot king had till now been ruler only of Gaelic and Cymric peoples. "Saxony," the land of the English across the Forth, had been simply a hostile frontier, the land of an alien race, whose rule had been felt in the assertion of Northumbrian supremacy and West-Saxon overlordship. Now for the first time Malcolm saw Englishmen among his subjects. Lothian, with its Northumbrian farmers and seamen, became a part of his dominions. And from the first moment of its submission it was a most important part. The wealth, the civilization, the settled institutions, the order of the English territory won by the Scottish king, placed it at the head of the Scottish realm. The clans of Cantyre or of the Highlands, the Cymry of Strathclyde, fell into the background

before the stout farmers of northern Northumbria. The spell drew the Scot king in course of time from the very land of the Gael. Edinburgh, an English town in the English territory, became ultimately his accustomed seat. In the midst of an English district the Scot kings gradually ceased to be the Gaelic chieftains of a Gaelic people. The process at once began which was to make them Saxons, Englishmen in tongue, in feeling, in tendency, in all but blood. Nor was this all. The gain of Lothian brought them into closer political relations with the English crown. The loose connexion which the king of Scots and Picts had acknowledged in owning Eadward the Elder as father and lord, had no doubt been drawn tighter by the fealty now owed for the fief of Cumbria. But Lothian was English ground, and the grant of Lothian made the Scot king "man" of the English king for that territory, as Earl Eadwulf was Cnut's "man" for the land to the south of it. Social influences, political relations, were henceforth to draw the two realms together; but it is in the cession of Lothian that the process really began.

The Æthelings in Normandy.

At the moment this settlement of the north was chiefly important as freeing Cnut's hands to deal with dangers which were now gathering in the south. The policy by which Æthelred had detached Normandy from its old association with the Danes was at last bearing fruit. Of the line of Cerdic none remained to dispute Cnut's throne save

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the two sons of Eadmund Ironside, who had found a distant refuge in Hungary, and their uncles, the sons of Æthelred by his second marriage with Emma, the Æthelings Ælfred and Eadward. From the time of their father's flight from England, these had remained at the Norman court, and though in wedding Emma anew to Cnut, Richard the Good virtually pledged himself to give no Norman aid to his nephews' claims, their presence at Rouen was still a check on the English king. Children as they were of Emma, and bred up from childhood at the ducal court, the two Æthelings seemed to every Norman members of the ducal house and Normans like themselves; and from after events we see how readily the Norman knighthood would have followed them in any effort to gain the English crown. Every day made the chance of such an attack a more formidable danger; for not only was Normandy growing fast in population and military power, but the energy of its people was already in secret revolt against the peaceful system of their dukes. The duchy was seething with hot-blooded soldiers, longing for enterprize, as well as envious of the Danes who put into their harbours with booty won on English ground; and an occasional march to aid the Parisian king, or to avenge a wrong offered by the Burgundian duke, or to drive off neighbour princes from the border, was all that Richard's peaceful reign offered in the way of outer warfare, while his stern hand crushed

roughly out all chance of disorder at home. Little by little therefore the old northern spirit of wandering and venturing found outlets elsewhere. Roger de Toesny led a troop of warriors to Spain; and some Norman pilgrims in Apulia grew fast into a war-band which was to change the destinies of southern Italy.

Robert the Devil.

England offered a nearer field for adventure than Italy or Spain; and, wedded as he was to a Norman wife, Cnut must have watched jealously the temper of the Norman people through the reigns of Richard the Good and of his son and successor Richard the Third. The danger which he dreaded at last actually fronted him on the accession of Robert—Robert the Devil as men called him in after time—who became duke of Normandy on his brother's death in 1028. The land was now ringing with the marvellous victories over Greek or Moslem which Normans were winning in far-off fields; poor knights and younger sons, sick of peace and good order, were streaming off, in band after band, over Alps and Pyrenees; and the restless temper of his people stirred the blood in the veins of their duke. From the first Robert showed his warlike activity, crushing revolt within his duchy, bringing Brittany back into submission, restoring Count Baldwin to power in Flanders, and seating King Henry in the face of all opposition on the French throne. But France offered no such scope for greed and ambition as

the land over the Channel. England was nearer than Spain or Apulia, and the title of the sons of Æthelred gave a fair pretext for attack. We are left to Norman writers for the incidents of the quarrel, and we know nothing of its cause, or of the grounds which induced Robert to set aside the claims of his sister and of the child she had borne to Cnut. But if greed and ambition were strong enough to set these aside, the claims of the sons of Æthelred, who were equally akin to him, gave Robert a fair pretext for attack. The Norman baronage at once backed him in his plan of invasion, and the duke set sail with the eldest of the two Æthelings, Ælfred.

William the Norman.

That Robert's fortune would have been that of the later conqueror may well be doubted. Cnut was at the height of his power, and the one chance of success against him lay in an English rising which might have welcomed the Ætheling. But contest there was to be none. Robert's project broke down before the obstacle which has so often foiled attacks on the English shore; for a storm carried the Norman fleet down the Channel, and flung it wrecked on the coast of Jersey. It may have been the bitterness of this failure which drove the duke from his throne. Pilgrimages to the Sepulchre of Christ were now growing common in Normandy, and Robert announced his purpose of going as pilgrim to the Holy Land. But some prevision of the doom which awaited him drove

the duke to name his successor ere he left. Claimants of the duchy there were in plenty, whether of the stock of Richard the Fearless or of the stock of Richard the Good. Child of his own, Robert had but one. In the little dell which parts the two cliffs, the two "fells" which have given their name to Falaise, one may still hear the chatter of the women who wash their linen at the brook. One of such a group, a tanner's daughter of the town, had caught the light fancy of Robert, and became the mother of his boy. At the moment of the child's birth the gossips noted the sturdy grasp with which his fingers seized and held the straws scattered on the floor. He would be no Norman, they laughed, to let go what once he had gripped. The laugh proved a true prophecy, but none of the laughers knew how mighty a prize that hand was in after days to grip. It was this boy, William, whom the duke forced his barons to choose as their future lord ere he left the land which he was never to see again; for after a few months' stay, he died on his return at Nicæa in July, 1035. The news of his death set Normandy on fire. The boy-duke was a child and a bastard, scorned for age as for shame of birth by the haughty lords whom the upgrowth of feudalism had made powers in the land. Even the dukes before him had found it hard to secure peace and order in a country which was filled with turbulent nobles, and whose

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people had still the wild northern blood with its love of lawless outbreak stirring in their veins. "Normans must be trodden down and kept under foot," sang one of their poets, "and he who bridles them may use them at his need." But no child-duke could bridle them. The great border nobles held William's rule at defiance. On every height and mound rose square keeps of solid stone, which helped their builders to hold the child-duke at bay. The land became a chaos of bloodshed and anarchy, while William saw his friends murdered beside him, and was driven from refuge to refuge by foes who sought his life.

Death of Cnut.

That the boy whose reign began in this wild storm was to tear England from the grasp of the Dane and to hold the land at his will, Cnut could not know. What he saw was the drifting away of the danger to his throne from the Æthelings across the Channel. From a boy-duke of eight years old, from this chaotic Normandy, small aid could come to the sons of Æthelred. But it was at the moment when his last difficulty vanished that Cnut's vigour suddenly gave way. Long and eventful as his reign had been he was still only a man of forty when he died, in November, 1035, leaving his work all unfinished. The empire he had built up at once fell to pieces at the tidings of his death. Norway threw off the Danish yoke by driving out Cnut's son Swein, and chose as king the child Magnus, son of Olaf; while Swein fled to

Denmark to share the kingdom with his brother Harthacnut till his death a few months after. For years to come Harthacnut's energies were wholly absorbed in guarding Denmark from the danger of Norwegian invasion, and his treaty with Magnus that if either of the kings died childless his dominions should pass to the other, showed the insecurity of the house of Cnut even in Denmark itself. The kingdom of England which was to have fallen to Harthacnut by his father's will, and doubtless was to have carried with it the overlordship of the whole empire, lay beyond the reach of the hardly-pressed ruler of Denmark; it was claimed by another son of Cnut, Harald, and itself fell asunder into two parts. A tragic fate, too, awaited the house of Cnut. Before seven years were past the same weakness which had cut short his own life had carried off his four children, not one of them having reached twenty-four years of age, and all childless save Gunhild, the wife of the German, Henry III., whose only child became a nun. The race of Gorm in the direct line of descent thus became extinct in little more than a hundred years after he had finished his work of the creation of the Danish kingdom.

CHAPTER X

THE HOUSE OF GODWINE

1035–1053

Position of Godwine.

THE death of Cnut left Godwine the greatest political power in the land. For years he had stood second only to the king in his English realm; as earl of Wessex he was master of the wealthiest and most powerful portion of the kingdom; and Cnut's absences on foreign campaigns had accustomed Englishmen to look on Godwine as the real centre of administrative government. The will of Cnut that he should be succeeded by Harthacnut in the English kingdom and the overlordship of his northern realms, embodied no doubt not the king's purpose only, but that of the minister who had been his chief counsellor for fifteen years past; and represented that connexion with the North, that maintenance of a Scandinavian empire, which was as yet the policy of Godwine as it had been the policy of the king. For English as was his blood, and English as his policy was to become

in later days, Godwine can have shared but little the general drift of English feeling against the Dane. As yet, indeed, he must have seemed to Englishmen more Dane than Englishman. He had risen through the favour, he had guided the counsels of a Danish conqueror. His renown as a warrior had been won in Danish wars. He was wedded to a wife of Danish blood, and his two eldest children, Swein and Harold, bore the Danish names of Cnut's elder boys. It was no wonder therefore that he supported on Cnut's death the continuance of that union of England with Denmark which Harthacnut's succession secured.

Godwine's policy.

But the internal policy of both king and minister had made their outer policy impossible. Their whole system of government and administration had nursed English feeling into a new and vigorous life. To England Cnut had been an English king. If he had ruled other lands it was from Winchester, as dependencies of his English crown. The very Danes who had settled in England had learned through his long and peaceful reign to look on themselves as Englishmen, and on Denmark as a foreign land. But Harthacnut had scarcely been seen in England; from early childhood he had been trained in Denmark as its king, and it might well be thought that his rule meant the rule of England from a Danish throne. If the influence of Godwine and the Lady Emma at Winchester was strong enough to

hold the West-Saxon earldom true to the claims of Harthacnut, the rest of England called for a national king. In pleading for the succession of Harthacnut, Godwine doubtless seemed to the people at large to be pleading for Danish rule. To his fellow earls he seemed no doubt pleading for his own; and political rivalry united with national feeling in urging Earl Leofric of Mercia to withstand him. It marks the hold which Cnut's greatness had given him on the affections of Englishmen that even in setting aside Harthacnut they showed no will to set aside his father's line. Not a cry was raised for the children of Æthelred. Cnut's death, indeed, had at once been followed by a descent of the Ætheling Eadward with forty Norman ships at Southampton, but the attack had failed, and its failure was decisive.

Harald Harefoot.

It was Cnut's elder son Harald, "Harefoot," as he was called for his swiftness of foot, who, Dane as he was, at any rate represented an England separate from Denmark, that Leofric and the "lithsmen," a merchant-gild of London, called to the throne. The hus-carls of the dead king were still with Emma at Winchester, and a word from Godwine would have plunged England into war. But warrior as he had shown himself in earlier days, it is the noblest trait in the character of Godwine throughout his political career that he shrank from civil bloodshed. The Witan gathered at Oxford to decide the question of the succession; Leofric

demanded a division of the realm, and stubborn as was Godwine's resistance, he yielded at last to the doom of his fellow nobles. For the moment indeed his influence, and it may be dread of the dead king's hus-carls, saved his own earldom, which was suffered to remain faithful to Harthacnut: but the rest of England took Harald for its king.

Division of England.

It was, however, impossible that such a division of the realm could last long. The strife which had again broken the land into two parts was indeed the renewal of the old contest between Wessex and the rest of England, but the new attitude of London marked a decisive and important change. From the moment that London sided, not with Wessex but with England, the relation of parties was altered, and the ultimate victory of the national will over provincial jealousies could be no longer doubtful. If the new division of England between two claimants recalled the compromise of Olney, there was still a significant difference. It was the king of the joint Mercian and Northumbrian realms who was now over-lord, while the West-Saxon ruler sank to the position of under-king. Such a settlement struck a hard blow at the authority of Earl Godwine. Under Cnut he had been second only to the king in his power over all England; with a stranger such as Harthacnut he would have ruled supreme. But Leofric's action limited his power to Wessex, and

even in Wessex it would seem as if Emma was a formidable rival, for if, as is stated, she had been already robbed by Harald of Cnut's treasure, she still preserved Cnut's body of hus-carls round her at Winchester. The continued absence of Harthacnut, too, who was still held in Denmark, weakened Godwine's position. Even in his own earldom men's minds turned from the absent to the present king; and it would seem that public feeling was wholly against Godwine's policy, for the Chronicle says "the cry was then greatly in favour of Harald."

Murder of Ælfred.

So difficult indeed was his position in Wessex, that it woke the Æthelings over sea to a fresh attempt. It may be that Emma, hopeless of inducing Harthacnut to take possession of his West-Saxon kingdom, had turned to the children she had so long forgotten in Normandy. It was at any rate in peaceful guise, and with the pretext of visiting his mother, that Ælfred, the younger Ætheling, landed with a train of Normans at Dover, and rode through Surrey towards Winchester. He may have hoped that the old West-Saxon loyalty would spring into fresh life as he neared the West-Saxon capital; but whatever was his purpose it was ended by a brutal deed. At Guildford he was seized, carried over the Thames to Harald Harefoot, and by Harald's orders blinded, and left to die among the monks at Ely, while the Normans who followed him were put to the sword or sold for slaves. Even among

Englishmen the cruel act was followed by a thrill of horror. "Viler deed was never done in this land since Dane came here," sang an English minstrel. Over sea it kindled among the Normans a thirst for vengeance which never ceased till the day of Senlac. And justly or unjustly, the Norman hate centred itself on Godwine. What his part in the matter had been it is hard to tell. Whether or not the seizure was made by Godwine's men is a matter of doubt, but it was made in Godwine's earldom; and the success of Ælfred would have overthrown Godwine's power. So general was the conviction that the deed lay at his door, that in the next reign the earl was charged with the guilt by Archbishop Ælfric, and forced to purge himself solemnly of the charge by oath before the altar. But though Godwine was acquitted by the Witan of the charge of betrayal, his oath weighed little with Ælfred's kindred. Emma believed that it was the earl who had given up her son, and Eadward looked on him as his brother's murderer. It was no wonder that throughout the length and breadth of Normandy men held that the blood of Ælfred and of the Normans who followed him rested upon Godwine and his house.

Submission of Godwine.

The political action of the earl after the murder gave strength to the Norman belief. Godwine's loss of power had already been great. His influence was now bounded by Wessex, and even in Wessex it was seriously threatened. The com-

promise which reserved southern England to Harthacnut had every hour grown more impossible; men wearied of waiting for a king who never came, and it seemed as if Wessex had to choose between submission to Harald Harefoot, or a rising in favour of the line of Cerdic. But Godwine had as yet no mind to abandon the house of Cnut, though it seems as if despair of Harthacnut's coming was already swaying him to the side of Harald when Ælfred landed. His landing precipitated a change of policy which had already become inevitable, and the murder made further hesitation impossible. It was the alliance with Emma which had enabled the earl to hold Wessex for Harthacnut, and now that Emma was parted from him by her belief in his guilt, Godwine was forced from the position he had held so stubbornly. A new Witenagemot was gathered in 1037 to receive his submission. Emma was driven from the country; Harthacnut was forsaken by the earl and the men of Wessex, "for that he was too long in Denmark," and Harald became king over all the land.

Harthacnut.

Godwine remained earl of Wessex. But if he had forsaken Harthacnut, Emma was still faithful to her son. She seems to have cared little for her children by Æthelred, whom she had not seen since their boyhood, and to have concentrated her love on her younger children by Cnut. When the sentence of the Witenagemot therefore drove

her from Winchester, she took refuge not in Normandy, which was now backing the Ætheling Eadward, but in Flanders. Her temper was active as of old. From "Baldwin's land," her messengers again pressed Harthacnut to strike a blow for his heritage; and in the winter of 1039 he sailed to Flanders to devise plans with his mother for a great invasion, and returned to the north at the opening of spring to put himself at the head of the fleet which he was preparing. But death had already removed his rival. In March, 1040, Harald Harefoot died at Oxford, and was carried to Westminster for burial. When Harthacnut touched at Bruges with his fleet he was met by the news that the English Witan had chosen him for their king; and in the following June he landed peacefully at Sandwich with the fleet of sixty vessels which had been gathered for the conquest of the kingdom. The fierce vengeance of the young sovereign, it may be of Emma, tore up his predecessor's body from its resting-place and flung it into a fen. Godwine again found himself in hard straits. He had to clear himself by solemn oath of the charge of betrayal of Ælfred brought against him by Archbishop Ælfric. All memory of the stand he had made for the succession of Harthacnut was lost in the fresher memory of his submission to Harald. But costly gifts enabled him to retain his earldom through Harthacnut's reign. The two years of the young king's rule were marked by

little save heavy taxation for payment of the Danish host which was to have won back England, and by the stern suppression of resistance to this Danegeld at Worcester. Discontent would probably have passed into revolt, had not the certainty of his approaching end turned men's minds to the Ætheling Eadward. The rise of a new sympathy for the house of Cerdic had been seen in the charge brought against Godwine, and the misrule of Harald and Harthacnut had rendered the succession of another Dane impossible. Even Harthacnut turned to his mother's son; and ere he died Eadward was summoned by the king himself from his refuge in Normandy, and recognized as heir to the throne.

The Ætheling Eadward.

A halo of tenderness spread in after-time round this last king of the old English stock. Legend told of his pious simplicity, his blitheness and gentleness of mood, the holiness that won him in after-time his title of Confessor, and enshrined him as a saint in the abbey church at Westminster. His was the one figure that stood out bright against the darkness when England lay trodden under foot by Norman conquerors; and so dear became his memory that liberty and independence itself seemed incarnate in his name. Instead of freedom the subjects of William or Henry called for the "good laws of Eadward the Confessor." But it was, in fact, as a mere shadow of the past that the exile returned to the land that had cast

him out in his childhood. His blue eyes and flaxen hair, indeed, were those of his race; but the fragile form, the delicate complexion, the transparent womanly hands of Eadward told that no great warrior or ruler was to mount in him the throne of Æthelstan and Eadgar. He was a stranger too in the realm. Thirty years had passed since the child had been driven from English shores, and save in his fruitless descent on Southampton he had never touched them since. He had grown to manhood at the Norman court. His memories were not of the father who had died in his childhood, or of the mother who had forsaken him through long years of exile, but of the Norman dukes who had sheltered him, of his uncle Richard the Good, of his cousins Richard and Robert, of Robert's son William, the young kinsman who was battling with a storm of rebellion and treachery in the land which Eadward loved. In all but name, indeed, he was a Norman. He spoke the Norman tongue; he used in Norman fashion a seal for his charters; his sympathies lay naturally with the friends of his Norman life. The Englishmen among whom he found himself when Harthacnut summoned him to his court were all strangers to him, and the shy, timid exile of forty had neither Cnut's temper nor Cnut's youth to enable him to throw himself into new associations. It is characteristic of Eadward's sympathies that ailing as his half-brother was, he seems again

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to have quitted England after his recognition as heir to the crown, and to have been still in Normandy in the summer of 1042, when Harthacnut "died as he stood at his drink" at a marriage feast in Lambeth.

Coronation of Eadward.

It was not, indeed, till the Easter-tide of 1043 that Eadward saw himself crowned at Winchester by the two archbishops as English king. The months that lay between this crowning and the death of his predecessor had probably been months of busy negotiation with the English nobles, and above all with the earl of Wessex. For jealously as he had been looked on by Harthacnut, Godwine was still the greatest power in the land. Earl Siward was hardly settled in his distant Northumbria, and the mutilated Mercia of Leofric could not vie in extent or power with the great West-Saxon earldom. Wealth, character, political experience, the memory of his long supremacy under Cnut, and of his personal sway for two years over Wessex after Cnut's death, as well as a sense of the skill and daring with which he had faced and lived through the ill-will of Harald and the hatred of Harthacnut, gave Godwine in fact at this moment a weight beyond that of any other Englishman. Nor did it seem likely that this weight would be thrown on Eadward's side. The great house to which his wife belonged seems to have clung almost as closely to the earl as his own sons. Two of her brother Ulf's children,

Beorn and Osbeorn, were in England at this time, and closely linked to the earl; while their elder brother, Swein Estrithson, as he was called, was fighting in the northern seas for the crown of Denmark. But at the news of Harthacnut's death, Swein sailed back to England to claim a crown which seemed easier to win. Kinship, gratitude, political tradition alike seemed to sway Godwine to Swein's side both in his claims to the Danish and the English thrones. The earl owed all to Cnut, and Swein was not only his own wife's nephew, but he was Cnut's sister's son, and nearest in blood, now Harthacnut was dead, to the king who had raised Godwine to the power he held. His support of Cnut's will, his fidelity to Harthacnut, show that three years before Godwine had looked to a union of the crowns of England and Denmark as of high political value, and such a union might easily have been brought about by the crowning of Swein, and his return to the North with a force of Englishmen. But whatever may have been the strength of Godwine's family sympathies, he must soon have seen that it was impossible to indulge them. As in his stubborn effort to secure half England for Harthacnut, Godwine found himself face to face with the will of a whole people. The worthlessness of Cnut's children had wiped out the memory of Cnut's greatness and wisdom. It was indeed the very policy of Cnut, the English and national

character of his rule, which had roused into new and stronger life the national consciousness of Englishmen, a consciousness which now expressed itself in the sudden assertion of their will to have no stranger to rule over them, but one of their own royal stock. Before King Harthacnut was buried, says the chronicle, "all folk chose Eadward for their king."

State of Normandy.

That there was still dispute among the nobles at the Witenagemot shows that the acclamation of the people found fierce opposition, while the assertion of Swein Estrithson in after days that his claim was bought off by a promise of the crown should he outlive his rival, points to intricate negotiations before Eadward was accepted by all. The negotiations may have been aided in some measure by pressure from the Norman court. The earlier troubles of the young duke's reign were now settling down, and under the guardianship of Ralf of Wacey the Norman baronage was brought back into a partial obedience, and the pacification of Normandy was aided by a movement which fell in with the religious excitement of the time. In the universal disorder which raged over feudal Gaul men turned to the Church as the one body which had preserved some sense of its duty to save men from oppression and bloodshed. Anarchy had been worst in the south, and from the south came a reaction against it. The bishops and abbots of Aquitaine met in synod to

bid men lay aside their arms, to denounce the warfare and robbery about them, and to proclaim a "Truce of God." As the preachers preached this new gospel, the crowds they gathered stretched out their hands to heaven with shouts of "Peace! Peace!" The "Covenant" spread like fire through southern and eastern France; but the first zeal of its preachers had to content itself with more moderate demands on human passion before it could penetrate to the west, and the universal peace dwindled to a suspension of arms from the sunset of Wednesday to the sunrise of the following Monday. Even this proved too hard a doctrine for Norman ears. But a timely famine backed its advocates with signs of the wrath of God, and the duke pressed the truce on his subjects. A great council of nobles and prelates gathered at Caen, in 1042, enacted that for four days and five nights in every week men should be free from dread of wound or death, and castle and borough and village from dread of attack.

Duke William.

The "Truce," well kept or ill, aided the young duke's efforts to restore order in the land. William was no longer the mere child whom his father left behind him. Young as he was, and he was still not fifteen, he must have been already showing signs of the huge stature, the giant-like strength, which lifted him in after days out of the common herd of men. From boyhood he was a mighty hunter, and the twang of the bow that no arm but

his could wield was heard in the Norman woodlands. The temper too which marked his later years was ripening under the stress of his eventful history. No boy ever had a rougher training. Friends had been hewn down or poisoned beside him, and he had been driven from refuge to refuge by foes who would have slain him if they could. The watchfulness, the patience, the cunning, which lay throughout his life side by side with a mighty energy and an awful wrath in William's temper, had their first upgrowth in these early days of peril; and with them must have been already awakening under the same pressure, that political sense, that wide outlook and clearness of vision, which lifts William so high above the statesmen of his time.

Eadward and Normandy.

But even if the young duke himself had looked with indifference on the fortunes of a kinsman whom he had known from his childhood, the sympathies of his nobles would have been with one whom they looked upon as himself almost a Norman; and if we set aside the Norman boast that England at this juncture yielded to the threats of the court of Rouen, we may take the boast at least as an indication that the influence of that court was used to support the claim of Eadward. Even after his recognition as king, this influence must still have been employed in overcoming his fears. Eadward seems to have hung back from the crown. The men among

whom he was to go were strangers to him and worse than strangers. Those who were to be his counsellors had been the counsellors of kings who had long held from him the throne of his race. Those who were to be his warriors were the men who had but a year before driven off his fleet from Southampton. The memory of his brother's murder hung about him, rankling in his mind, as we shall see, for years; and the most powerful of the earls who called him to the English throne was the man whose hands he believed to be red with his brother's blood. If the Norman story be true, it was not till hostages for his safety had been sent to the court at Rouen that Eadward would consent to cross the seas. When he landed on the shores of his new realm he brought with him a train that showed his reliance on Norman support. In later days William asserted that his cousin, prescient of his coming childlessness, had promised in the fashion which was getting common in the northern states, and of which there had been many instances among the Danish kings, to bequeath his realm to him on his death. That this was so is likely enough, though the bequest was one which English nobles were hardly likely to recognize. But in any case the young duke must have seen the shadow of his after-conquest falling over England, as its new king sailed from Norman shores with a train of Norman knights and Norman churchmen. Foremost among these in rank was

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Eadward's nephew Ralf, a son of his sister Godgifu, by her Norman marriage with Drogo of Mantes. Another Norman kinsman, Odo or Odda, was probably in his train; and Richard the son of Scrob may have been among the Norman knights who formed the king's guard. Two Norman priests, William and Ulf, came as his chaplains. But closer to Eadward stood one to whom he had owed much in his exile, and his affection for whom was of long standing, Robert, abbot of Jumièges. Robert either accompanied or soon followed the king to England, and was soon seen to possess his confidence as no other man possessed it.

The state of England.

From the moment of their landing, however, the king and his group of strangers found themselves lonely and helpless in the land. With his accession, indeed, the long struggle of the ealdormen for a virtual independence seemed at last to have reached its aim. The land appeared about to break up into three great fiefs, as little dependent on the central monarchy as the fiefs of the continent. Siward ruled as he listed in the north, and no royal writ ran across the Humber. Leofric was almost as much his own master in Mid-Britain. Wessex, instead of giving a firm standing-ground to the house of Cerdic, was now in the hands of a master who overawed the crown. Even more than in Cnut's days Godwine's voice was supreme in the council-chamber. The policy and government were alike his own, and in both he showed

his wonted ability. Without, indeed, the realm was secured from attack by the turn of foreign affairs; for Normandy was a friend to the Norman-bred king, and the strife between Magnus of Norway and Swein Estrithson for the throne of Denmark shielded England from any invasion by the northmen. Friendly embassies, too, came from the French court, while the earlier marriage of the Emperor Henry III. with Gunhild, a daughter of Cnut and Emma, had linked him by blood to Eadward, and strengthened the friendly intercourse between the German and English courts which had gone on from the days of Eadward the Elder. Near home Gruffydd, the son of Llewelyn, was building up a formidable power over the western border, but he was too busy as yet with his Welsh rivals to seem a serious danger; while in the north Macbeth, who had lately risen through the murder of King Duncan to the throne of Scotland, showed himself a peaceful neighbour. It was rather within than without that Godwine's work had to be done, and that it was well done was proved by the peace of the land; while the popularity which he won in Wessex shows his good government of his own earldom.[1]

[1] The political structure of Cnut's administration indeed had been tested by the troubles and revolutions which followed on his death; and the new strength of the crown was shown in the fact that none of these troubles had in the least affected that structure. Even the fourfold division of the English earldoms and the severance of Wessex from the crown was retained, in spite of the return of the line of Wessex to the throne.

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Siward of Northumbria.

But however wise and successful Godwine's rule might be, we shall see in years to come how bitterly it was resented by the king who found himself a puppet in his hands. Eadward was indeed powerless in his realm. He could not even hope, like his predecessors, to snatch a fragment of authority by pitting one great noble against another. In Northumbria Siward had but just won his earldom by a deed of blood. By his marriage with the daughter of a former Northumbrian earl, Ealdred, he had in 1038 become master of Deira or Yorkshire, but Bernicia had passed to Ealdred's brother Eadwulf. Three years later, however, Eadwulf was cut down at

Part of this no doubt may be due to the influence of Godwine, but in fact the continuance of Godwine's power may in itself be looked upon as a proof of the strength of the administrative system and tradition of which he was the embodiment. That system remained indeed in all respects firmly established throughout the whole reign of the Confessor to the very conquest of the Normans. The military organization continued unchanged, as we see later from the hus-carls quartered at towns like Wallingford and Dorchester; while from the description of the new armament used by Harold in his later wars with the Welsh, it was clearly with this picked body of troops, and not with the fyrd of the neighbouring shires, that he won his victories in South Wales; and they formed the real strength of his army both at Stamford Bridge and at Senlac. Of the Hoard again we catch a glimpse in the legend of Hugolin, which shows that the Danegeld, if still an unpopular tax, was yet rigidly levied, and formed the mainspring of the royal finance; and in the troubles of Emma we see the first instance of that vital importance to the crown of the possession of the hoard or treasure, as well as of the command of the body of hus-carls whose pay was drawn from it. The administrative machinery too was not only maintained, but developed in the more organized form which the Royal Chapel assumed under Godwine and Harold, an incidental proof of

the very court of Harthacnut by Siward, who thus in 1041 became invested with the whole Northumbrian earldom from Humber to Tweed. The new earl, with his giant stature, his Danish blood, the personal vigour which earned him the surname of Digera or the Strong, was a fitting representative of the district over which he ruled. His stern, rough handling kept the wild Northumbrians in awe; but dreaded as his ruthlessness might be, it brought little peace or order to the land.[1] Northumbria indeed stood apart from the rest of Britain. The old anarchy had deepened with the settlement of the Danes. The roads were haunted with robbers, so that men could

which is given in the adoption of the Norman practice of authenticating all documents issued in the king's name by the royal seal; a step which created the Chancellor, as the Hoard had already created the Treasurer, and as the levy of Danegeld, and the necessity of giving formal acquittance of the sums levied under it to the sheriffs, must already, in however inchoate a way, have originated the system of the Exchequer. With the consolidation of the royal administration no doubt there went on also a corresponding development of the royal justice, in the shape of appeals to the king himself from subordinate jurisdictions; and with the growing pressure of public business we find that the great office which had been instituted by Cnut in his appointment of a Secundarius, was continued under the Confessor in the rule of Godwine and Harold, the predecessors of the Norman Justiciar. At the time of the Norman Conquest therefore, the administrative system which has sometimes been called Norman was already growing up at the English court, and the true work of the Conqueror and his successors lay in its extension and development.

[1] "Licet dux Siwardus ex feritate judicii valde timeretur tamen tanta gentis illius crudelitas et Dei incultus habebatur ut vix triginta vel viginti in uno comitatu possent ire quin aut interficerentur aut deprædarentur ab insidiantium latronum multitudine" (Vit. Edw. (Luard), 421).

hardly travel with safety even in companies of thirty at a time; its distance from the south made the attendance of his thegns at the Witenagemots scant and uncertain; and the visits of the king, which in Eadgar's day were few, seemed to have ceased altogether under the Confessor. It was the home of savage feuds, of strife handed on from father to son even in the house of its earls. Marriage sat as lightly on them as bloodshedding;[1] and the rude violence of their life was unchecked even by religion. Churches gave no sanctuary against deeds of blood, and since the conquest of the north by the Danes not a single monastery of any historic importance survived

[1] Earl Uhtred, who held Northumbria under Æthelred and Cnut, married the daughter of Bishop Ealdhun of Durham, and with her got a share of the bishop's lands. He sent her back however to her father, and returned her lands with her; and took in her stead a rich burgher's daughter, whose father gave her to him on the simple terms that he should kill his enemy Thurbrand. But as he either could not or would not kill Thurbrand, the burgher's daughter in time ceased to be his wife, and he wedded Æthelred's daughter Ælfgifu (Sim. Durh. "De Obsess. Dunelm." (Twysden), p. 80). And with this loose morality went savage bloodshedding, and feuds of vendetta handed on from father to son. If Uhtred could not kill Thurbrand, Thurbrand owed him no thanks for it. When Uhtred submitted to Cnut, and came to do homage "at a place called Wiheal" (Freeman, "Norm. Conq." i. 376), "a curtain was drawn aside," and behind it stood Thurbrand with armed men, who forthwith cut down Uhtred and forty of his companions. The feud slumbered till Ealdred, Uhtred's son by the bishop's daughter, got his father's earldom. Then, whether by law or by murder, Thurbrand was slain. His son Carl took up the feud, and he and Earl Ealdred went about seeking each other's lives. Friends strove to make peace between them; they were reconciled; they became even sworn brothers (exchanging blood?); they vowed to go on pilgrimage to Rome

in the land once thronged by religious houses. Northumbria, indeed, wild and uncivilized as it was, gave Siward work enough to do in simply holding it down, and as yet prevented any real danger to the power of Godwine from the northern earl.

Leofric of Mercia.

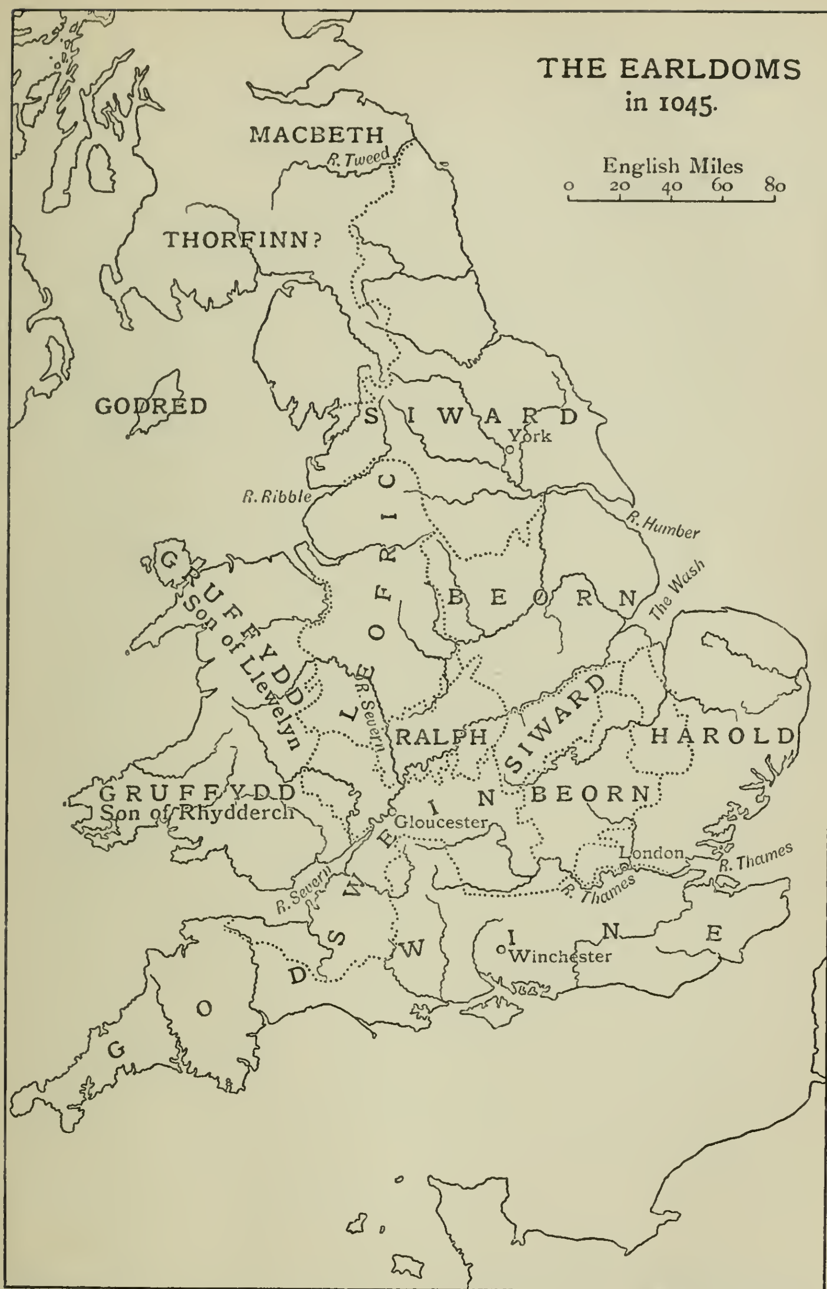
Leofric of Mercia, on the other hand, had held his earldom since the days of Cnut, and claimed to be descended from royal English blood. At the death of Cnut his influence, as we have seen, had been strong enough to match the power of Godwine, and to bring about the division of England between Harald and Harthacnut; and his importance must have increased with the submission of

together; and when driven back by stress of weather, Carl invited Ealdred to feast at his house and hunt in his woods. There in the woodland he slew him, and a stone cross on the spot recalled the crime for centuries after (Sim. Durh. "De Obsess. Dunelm." (Twysden), 81). The murder of his brother Eadwulf, who succeeded him in Bernicia, began the fortunes of Siward. But Siward had married Ealdred's daughter, and if he himself slew Ealdred's brother, the blood-feud with Thurbrand's house for Ealdred's death fell none the less to his son. Some years after the Norman conquest, as Carl's sons were feasting "in the house of their elder brother at Seterington in Yorkshire," and unarmed, a body of Earl Waltheof's young thegns fell suddenly upon them. "The whole family, all the sons and grandsons of Carl, were cut off save one son, Sumorled, who chanced not to be present, and another, Cnut, whose character had won him such general love that the murderers could not bring themselves to slay him" (Freem. "Norm. Conq." iv. 525; Sim. Durh. "Gest. Reg." a. 1073, and more largely, "De Obsess. Dunelm." (Twysden), pp. 81, 82). The young thegns came back with spoil—"deletis filiis et nepotibus Carli reversi sunt multa in variis speciebus spolia reportantes" (Sim. Durh. "De Obsess. Dunelm." (Twysden), p. 82), while Waltheof "avi sui interfectionem gravissimâ clade vindicavit" (*ibid.* p. 81).

all England to Harald in 1037. To the end of his life he remained amongst the foremost powers of the land, and took rank as one of the three great earls. In mere extent, however, Mercia was now but a shadow of its former self. Even in the days of Cnut the Hwiccas of Worcestershire formed a separate government; under Harthacnut the breaking up of Mercia was yet more complete. The Magesætas of Hereford were gathered into a distinct earldom on the west, while the eastern provinces of Mercia had been shorn off to form a new earldom of the Middle-English of Leicester, with probably Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. Some of these districts returned in later days to the house of Leofric, and even at this time they may have still owned his supremacy, but his direct rule seems to have been confined to Cheshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, and the border of North Wales.

Godwine of Wessex.

Not only did Godwine's experience of government, his wealth, his ability, lift him high above Siward or Leofric, but the very earldom he held far outweighed the earldoms of Mid-England or the North. Wessex embraced almost all southern England, and southern England was the wealthiest and most important part of the realm. The full effects indeed of the separation of Wessex from the crown, and its formation into an earldom, could hardly be felt in Cnut's day, while all England was still but a part of a larger empire. But they were felt in the days of the Confessor, when



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the hereditary king of the West-Saxons found himself displaced from his own native realm by Godwine and his house. Eadward was the first descendant of Ælfred who was not lord of Wessex. He had indeed no local hold on the land at all; he was simply king, and it may possibly have been owing to this that he found his home no longer at Winchester but at Westminster. The fact indeed that this creation of a West-Saxon earldom, so obviously a mere expedient to meet the exigencies of the Danish rule, was not at once reversed, and the old connexion of Wessex with the crown restored on the accession of the Confessor, shows how absolutely powerless that king was from the first in the hands of Earl Godwine. Nor could Eadward look to either of the rival earls for aid in disputing with the all-powerful Godwine the mastery of his kingdom. And yet by a singular irony of fate it was just through this mastery of Godwine's that England remained a kingdom at all. Had the three earldoms been of equal weight, or their possessors men of the same temper, the energies of Godwine as of his fellow-earls might have been spent in the building up of a separate dominion. It was his superiority of power as well as his keener ambition that drew him from the mere establishment of a great fief to the larger ambition of ruling the land.

With such an aim the earl saw that his profit lay, not in weakening or annihilating the authority

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His policy.

of the crown, but in seizing that authority for his own purposes, and in paving the way by a dexterous use of Eadward for the succession of the house of Godwine to the throne. Such a design can alone account for the steady policy of annexation by which he at once began to draw all England into his own hands or those of his kindred. The importance of keeping watch over Wales, and of preserving the means of communication with it as Gruffydd built up a national sovereignty, may explain the establishment of Godwine's eldest son, Swein, in the border-district of Hereford. But a new earldom was created for him by the addition to this district of two other Mercian shires, the shires of Oxford and Gloucester; and this earldom was again swelled by the detachment of Berkshire and Somerset from Godwine's own Wessex. The position of Oxford as commanding the line of the Thames, and of Gloucester as commanding the lower Severn, gave Swein's earldom a military as well as a political importance. But while in Swein the house of Godwine pressed upon the west, a grant of the East-Anglian earldom to the second son, Harold, gave it the mastery of the east. In the very heart of England Godwine set his nephew Beorn, a brother of Swein Estrithson, as earl of the Middle-English about Leicester. The addition to Beorn's earldom of Nottingham and the old land of the Gyrwas and Lindiswaras made him

master of the Trent, as Swein of the Severn and the Thames; and 1045 the whole English coast from Humber round to Severn mouth had passed into the hands of the house of Godwine.

Extension of his power.

Nor was this all. Two years after the king's coronation Eadgyth, Godwine's daughter, became Eadward's wife. We can hardly doubt the meaning of this step. In setting Eadgyth beside the king Godwine aimed at meeting the secret hostility of the court, and detaching Eadward from the Norman counsellors who, as he was conscious, were busy working against him. The influence of Robert of Jumièges, who had been appointed bishop of London a year before, was as certain as his ill-will, and the memory of his brother's doom was stirred busily in Eadward's mind by the strangers round him. But so vast a stride towards the mastery of the realm as Godwine was making would of itself awake Eadward's suspicion, and hardly fail to rouse jealousy in other minds besides the king's. The house of Godwine had no hold on the North. In central England Leofric could hardly look with satisfaction on the advancing supremacy of his old rival. Godwine might still indeed have defied the efforts of the Norman courtiers, and the jealousies of his fellow earls, had he retained the confidence of the nation at large. But the national trust which his good government had won was at this moment shaken by the deeds of one who stood next to him in his own house.

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Difficulties of Godwine.

The first blow at Godwine's power came from the lawless temper of his eldest son, Swein. In the opening of 1046, a year after Eadgyth's marriage, Swein carried off the abbess of Leominster from her nunnery, and sent her back great with child. Such an act was too daring an outrage on the religious feeling of the country to pass unheeded. Ere Christmas came the young earl fled, outlawed it would seem, from his earldom to the court of Bruges; in the summer of 1047 he again left Baldwin's land, perhaps to take part in the war in the northern seas. Godwine was carefully watching the changes which went on in the North, for both the rival claimants to the dominions of Harthacnut, Magnus and Swein, alike laid claim to the English crown. But a year before Magnus had threatened England with invasion, and a great fleet had been gathered at Sandwich to meet his expected attack. It had been averted by successes of Swein Estrithson, which drew the host of Magnus to Denmark instead of the Channel; but the Norwegian king was now again victorious, and his triumph promised a renewal of the danger to England. Swein had been driven from all but a fragment of the Danish realm; the union of Denmark and Norway seemed certain; and the forces of the two realms in the hands of Magnus would in such a case have been thrown on English shores.

It was no wonder therefore that Swein hastened

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Opposition to his policy.

to his cousin's help; or that Godwine proposed in the Witan of 1047 to send a squadron of fifty ships to support his nephew's cause. But politic as the plan was, it met with a resistance which shows how greatly the earl's influence was shaken. The proposal, it is said at Leofric's instigation, was rejected, and Swein Estrithson was left to fight his battle alone. The result was the coming of that peril which Godwine foresaw. A new and overwhelming defeat drove Swein from his last hold in Denmark, and brought about the submission of the whole Danish kingdom to Magnus. Luckily for England, the conqueror's death at once followed his victory, and the two northern lands again parted from one another. Harald Hardrada became king in Norway: Swein Estrithson was welcomed back by the Danes; and the strife which shielded England from Scandinavian attack broke out afresh on more equal terms. The decision of the Witan was far from proving any heedlessness of the safety of the realm; had the attack come which Godwine feared, an English fleet was ready at this very time to meet it in the Channel. Their will was simply against intervention in the North itself, against actual meddling in a distant quarrel, and no doubt against spending English blood in the support of a nephew of Godwine. Enough, it may have been thought, had been done for Godwine's house at home. England could hardly be called on to spend blood and treasure in winning a

throne for his nephew abroad. But behind this natural hesitation of wiser men stirred the bitter enmity of the Norman group which Eadward had gathered round him. Even at this moment their opposition took a new vigour from the events which were passing over sea.

William and Lanfranc.

Ever since his kinsman left Normandy for the English shores, William had been slowly rising to his destined greatness. Troubles on the French frontier, occasional outbreaks of a baron here and there, failed to shake the hold on the land which tightened with every day of the young duke's grasp. Round him the men who were to play their part in our history were already grouping themselves. William Fitz-Osbern was growing up as William's friend and adviser. The duke's half-brother, Odo, was already Bishop of Bayeux. But chance had brought a wiser counsellor to William's side than Odo or Fitz-Osbern. In the early years of his rule, Lanfranc, a wandering scholar from Lombardy, had opened a school at Avranches. Lanfranc was the son of a citizen of Pavia, where he had won fame for skill in the Roman law. Whether driven out by some civil revolution, or drawn by love of teaching to the west, Lanfranc made his way to Normandy; and troubled as was the time, the fame of his school at Avranches soon spread throughout the land. A religious conversion however interrupted his work. Lanfranc quitted his scholars to seek the

poorest and lowliest monastery he could find in Normandy, and came at last to a little valley edged in with woods of ash and elm through which a "bec" or rivulet ran down to the Risle, where Herlouin, a knight of Brionne, had found shelter from the world. Herlouin was busy building an oven with his own hands when the stranger greeted him with "God save you." "Are you a Lombard?" asked the knight-abbot, struck with the foreign look of the man. "I am," he replied: and praying to be made a monk, Lanfranc fell down at the mouth of the oven and kissed Herlouin's feet. The religious impulse was a real one; but in spite of the break from the world and its learning which Lanfranc sought in this retirement at Bec, he was destined to be known as a great scholar and statesman rather than as a saint. It was in vain that he dreamed of seeking a yet sterner refuge in some solitude. The abbot's will chained him to the monastery, and Lanfranc's teaching raised Bec in a few years into the most famous school in Christendom. The zeal which drew scholars and nobles alike to the little house of Herlouin was in fact the first wave of an intellectual movement which was now spreading from Italy to the ruder countries of the West. The whole mental activity of the time concentrated itself in the group of scholars who gradually gathered round Lanfranc; the fabric of the canon law and of mediæval scholasticism, with the

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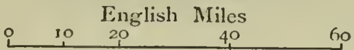
philosophic scepticism which first awoke under its influence, all trace their origin to Bec. But Lanfranc was to be more than a great teacher. The eye of the young duke saw in the Lombard one who was fitted to second his own ardent genius; and in no long time the prior of Bec stood high among his counsellors.

Revolt in Normandy.

William was soon to need wise counsel. Young as he was, the pressure of his heavy hand already warned the strongest that they must fight or obey. In the more settled land about the Seine order was now fairly established; and in the coming contest it held firmly by the duke. But in the Bessin and Cotentin, where the old heathen and Norse traditions had been strengthened by recent Danish settlements, the passion for independence was strong. The greatest lords of the Cotentin and the Bessin, Neal of St. Sauveur, Randolf of Bayeux, Hamon of Thorigny, Grimbald of Plessis, waited but the signal to rise. And in 1047 the signal was given. Hitherto his bastard birth had done William little hurt, for of the descendants of Richard the Fearless or Richard the Good who might have claimed his duchy, some were churchmen, some had perished in the troubles of his youth, one had been his guardian and protector; while his cousin Guy, grandson of Richard the Good by his daughter's marriage with a Count of Burgundy, had been reared from childhood with William and gifted with broad lands at



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Vernon and Brionne. But Guy saw in the temper of the West a chance of winning the duchy from the bastard, and its lords were quick at answering his call.

Val-ès-Dunes.

So secret was the plot, that William was hunting in the woods of the Cotentin when the revolt broke out, and only a hasty flight from Valognes to Falaise saved him from capture. As he dashed through the fords of Vire with Grimbald on his track the Bessin and Cotentin were already on fire behind him; and their barons gathered at Bayeux swore on the relics of the saints that they would smite William wherever they might find him. They were soon to find him on the battle-field. The men of the more settled duchy beyond the Dive, the men of Caux and Hiesmes, the burghers of Lisieux and Rouen, of Evreux and Falaise, stood firmly by the duke. But William had no mind to stand the shock alone. Hardly twenty as he was, his cool head already matched the hot ardour of his youth; and he rode across the border to throw himself at the feet of the French king and beg for aid. The old alliance between the house of Hrolf and the house of Hugh Capet, shaken as it had been of late, was still strong enough to secure the help he sought; and King Henry himself headed a body of troops which stood beside William's Normans on the field of Val-ès-Dunes to the south-eastward of Caen. The fight that followed was little more than a fierce

combat of horse surging backwards and forwards over the slopes of the upland on which it was fought, and ended in the rout of the rebel host. The mills of the Orne were choked with the bodies of men slain in its fords or drowned in its stream.

William's victory.

The victory at Val-ès-Dunes was the turning-point in William's career. It was not merely that he had shown himself a born warrior, that horse and man had gone down before his lance, that he had faced and routed the bravest warriors of the Bessin; nor was it only that with this victory the struggle of the wild northman element in the duchy against civilization, against the French tongue, against union with Western Christendom, was to cease. It was that William had mastered Normandy. "Normans," said a Norman poet, "must be trodden down and kept under foot, for he only that bridles them may use them at his need"; and the young duke had bridled them to use them in a need which was soon to come. The valour which had so sullenly withstood him on the downs above Caen gave itself from that hour into its master's hands, and, mere youth of twenty as he was, William stood lord of Normandy as no duke had stood its lord before, lord of a Normandy whose restless vigour was spending itself as yet in the winning of realms for adventurers over sea, but was ready to spend itself now in winning realms for its duke nearer home. Far off as the conquest was, it was at Val-ès-Dunes that William fought his first fight for

France and Anjou.

the crown of Cerdic. It was the men who had sworn to smite him on the relics of Bayeux who were to win for him England.

It was France, however, rather than England, which directly felt the change in William's attitude, for in the year after Val-ès-Dunes, William measured swords with the greatest of the then French powers. Girt in on every side by great feudatories, the crowned descendants of Hugh Capet had been saved from utter ruin by the firm support of the dukes of Normandy, and the counts of Anjou. It was the Norman sword which had aided them to resist Burgundian disloyalty, and it was the sword of Norman and Angevin alike which saved them from the ambitious supremacy of the house of Blois. But it was just these two powers whose growth had now changed them from supports of the French crown into its most formidable dangers, and the policy of the French kings, unable to meet either single-handed, became more and more a policy of balance between them. At this time Anjou was the more pressing of the two foes. From a small province on either side the lower course of the Mayenne, with a few castles scattered over the lands of Blois and Touraine to the south and to the east of it, it had grown into the largest and most powerful state of central France. Southern Touraine had been gradually absorbed. Northern Touraine had been won bit by bit. A victory of the Angevin count, Geoffrey Martel, left Poitou at

his mercy, and the seizure of Maine brought his dominion to the Norman frontier. Geoffrey was soon at war with the king, and it was to purchase William's aid against this powerful vassal that King Henry had helped the duke to put down the revolt of the Cotentin.

War with Anjou.

The bargain was faithfully carried out, and the victory of Val-ès-Dunes was hardly won when the young duke and his Normans joined Henry in an attack on the Count of Anjou. A wooded hill-country formed the southern border of the Norman duchy, and from the hills of Vire and Mortagne the rivers Mayenne and Sarthe flow down to the heart of Geoffrey's country to Le Mans and Angers. It was on this border that war broke out in 1048, centering round Domfront and Alençon, towns which command the head-waters of the two streams. But the duke's success was as rapid and decisive as before. While Geoffrey marched to meet the French army, William surprised Alençon, avenged the insult of its burghers, who had hung skins over its walls on his approach, with shouts of "Hides for the tanner," by ruthlessly hewing off hands and feet, and returned as rapidly to secure the surrender of Domfront. The quick, sturdy blows put an end to the war; Geoffrey Martel made peace with king and duke, and the peace left the two fortresses he had won in the hands of William, to serve as a base for his future conquest of Maine.

Norman aims in England.

If Val-ès-Dunes had left William master of Normandy, the defeat of Count Geoffrey left him first among the powers of France. But it was not France only which was watching William's course. His new strength told at once on English politics. The victory of his cousin over the rebels who would have made him a puppet duke, must have spurred Eadward to struggle against the earl who had made him a puppet king, and his little group of foreign counsellors would watch the triumphs that followed Val-ès-Dunes as if every victory of William was a blow at Godwine and his house. We shall soon see that William himself was watching closely the struggle between Godwine and the king. What shape the young duke's dreams may have taken, whether he had already conceived the design which was two years later disclosed of following his cousin Eadward on the English throne, we cannot tell. But communications must have already passed between the Norman group around Eadward and the court of Rouen; and the nomination of an English prelate from among the circle of Norman courtiers showed the new confidence which Eadward was drawing from his cousin's victories. In the year of William's triumph over Geoffrey Martel one of the king's Norman chaplains, Ulf, was raised to the see of Dorchester, a diocese which stretched from the Humber to the Thames. As yet, however, there was nothing in William's attitude to mark hostility

Flanders.

to the house of Godwine. But the next step in the young duke's policy was to set their attitude to each other in a clearer light.

Already the course of events was drawing England into relations with the western world at once closer and more extensive than any she had formed since the days of Æthelstan. The first breath of the later Conquest passes over us as English politics interweave themselves with the politics, not of Scandinavia only, but of Normandy and France, of Flanders and Boulogne, of the Empire and the Papacy. It was to this wider field that the contest between Godwine and the Normans was to drift; and to follow the thread of English politics at this moment we have to turn to Flanders. Flanders was now one of the leading states of Western Christendom. The wild reach of forest and fen which Cæsar had seen stretching along the Scheldt and the Lower Rhine, a region veiled in bitter mist and swept by the frost-winds of the northern seas, had been subdued by the Roman sword, and won from the dying empire by men of kindred stock with the English conquerors of Britain. A portion of this wild land, the great triangle of territory between the Scheldt, the Channel, and the Somme, which was known as Flanders, became a county in the storm of the Danish inroads. Its counts won their lordship by hard fighting against the northmen. But the quick rise of Flanders to wealth and greatness

was due to the temper of the Flemings themselves. At the time we have reached their steady toil was already laying the foundation of that industrial greatness which the land preserved through the Middle Ages, and of that commercial activity which was to make it ere a hundred years had gone by the mart of the world. The industry of the Flemings found from the first a shelter in their counts. All the traditions of the country ascribed to its rulers a love of justice which lifted them above the princes of their time. Story told how Lyderic, the founder of their race, beheaded his eldest son for taking a basket of apples from an old woman without payment. The very feuds of the land were bounded by strict rule. Baron might wage his petty war with baron; but old usage and enacted law forbade the extension of the strife to husbandman or trader. Hot as the quarrel might be, too, fighting was its only outlet, for none might harry or imprison within the count's domain.

Its importance.

It was in the peace and order which this strict rule secured that the Flemings toiled their way to wealth. The counts understood and identified themselves with their people's love of industry and freedom, and Arnulf the Old, our Ælfred's grandson by the mother's side, became the Ælfred of Flemish history. The little boroughs of the land grew up for the most part beneath the shelter of its vast abbeys; names such as those of St.

Omer, St. Gherlain, St. Amand, St. Vedast, show that municipal life was almost a creation of the Church. Even the lordly Ghent of after days was but a borough which had clustered round the abbey of St. Bavon. But it was to Arnulf that tradition ascribed the institution of the great fairs which raised them into centres of commercial life, as well as the introduction of the weaving trade which made Flanders the earliest manufacturing country of Western Christendom. With equal sagacity the counts saw that the most precious gift they could confer on this rising industry was the gift of freedom. "Little charm," says Baldwin of Mons, "is there in a town for men to dwell therein save it be sheltered by the uttermost liberty." The freedom of settlement, the security of trade, the right of justice within their walls, the liberty of bequest and succession, which the Flemish boroughs were already acquiring, were soon to ripen into an almost complete self-government. The rapid prosperity of the country gave a corresponding importance to its rulers; and this importance was heightened by the situation of Flanders as a borderland between France and the Empire. Feudatories of the Emperor as of the king at Paris, though for different portions of their dominion, the counts soon learned to use their double allegiance to win a practical independence of either suzerain. The present ruler of Flanders, Baldwin of Lille, had reached a yet higher position

than his predecessors. His wife was the sister of King Henry of France. He was among the most powerful vassals of the empire.

Revival of the Empire.

The Empire had risen at this moment to a height unknown since the days of Charles the Great; a height from which it was from that hour slowly to fall. The wide dominion of Charles had been broken up by the quarrels of his house, the incursions of the northmen, and the rise of a national temper in the peoples whom he had bound into a state. But the tradition of a single Christendom with one temporal as with one spiritual head lived on in the minds of men; and in the German king Otto the Great the tradition again became a living fact. Conqueror of Italy, crowned at Rome as Emperor of the world, the claims of Otto to the supremacy of Western Christendom found no acknowledgment in Spain, in what we now call France, nor in England; in our own land indeed the assumption of imperial titles by Eadgar and Æthelred looks like a purposed answer to the imperial claims of Otto and his successors. But even apart from its claims over realms which denied its sway, the Empire stood from the hour of this revival high both in strength and extent above all other European powers. Lords of Germany and of the greater part of Italy, of the subject realms of Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland to the east, of the equally subject realms of Lorraine and Burgundy

to the west, wielding a more doubtful supremacy over Denmark and Hungary, the successors of Otto saw their rule owned from the Eider to the Liris, from Bruges to Vienna, from the Vistula to the Rhone.

The religious movement.

It was this mighty domain which passed in 1039, three years before Eadward's accession to the English throne, into the hands of the second of the Franconian line, the Emperor Henry the Third. None of its rulers had shown a nobler temper or a greater capacity for action. In seven years Bohemia was quieted, Hungary conquered, and public peace established throughout Germany. But the projects of Henry were wider than those of a merely German king. He crossed the Alps to put himself at the head of a movement for the reform of the Church. A new religious enthusiasm was awakening throughout Europe, an enthusiasm which showed itself in the reform of monasticism, in a passion for pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and in the foundation of religious houses. We have seen how energetically this movement was working in Normandy; it was the coldness, if not the antagonism, that the house of Godwine showed to it which was the special weakness of their policy in England. Godwine himself founded no religious house; he was charged by his enemies with plundering many. His son Swein outraged the religious sentiment of the day by his abduction of an abbess. But if it was repulsed by the house

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of Godwine, the revival found friends elsewhere. Leofric of Mercia was renowned for his piety and his bounty to religious houses. Eadward himself was saintly in his devotion. In England however, as abroad, the first vigour of the revival spent itself on the crying scandal of the day, the feudalization of the Church by grants or purchase of its highest offices as fiefs of lord or king, and by their transmission like lay estates from father to son.

The Empire and the Papacy.

It was against this abuse that Henry specially directed his action. In the theory of the Empire a spiritual head was as needful for Christendom as a secular head; Emperor and Pope were alike God's vice-gerents in His government of the world. But the Papacy was now on the verge of a more complete feudalization than the meaner prelacies of the Western Church. Three claimants now disputed the chair of St. Peter; of these, two had been raised to it by the Roman barons, one by bribery of the Roman people. Their deposition, the elevation of a German Pope, edicts against the purchase of ecclesiastical offices, showed Henry's zeal in the purification of the Church. It was shown still more grandly when the bishop whom he had called to the Papacy as Leo IX. renounced at a warning from the deacon Hildebrand the papal ornaments to which he had no title but the nomination of the Emperor, and only resumed them after a formal election by the clergy of Rome. Henry owned the justness of the principle,

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and Leo became his coadjutor in the settlement of Christendom. From the reforms of Henry the Third dates that revival of the Papacy which was soon to deal a fatal blow at the Empire itself. Hildebrand, the future Gregory the Seventh, was in Leo's train as he returned over the Alps, and continued to mould the policy of the Papacy in accordance with his own high conception of the commission of Christ's Church on earth. But for the moment the ecclesiastical reforms of the Emperor were interrupted by the troubles of the Empire itself. Henry's greatness stirred the jealousy of his feudatories; and though his wonderful activity held the bulk of his realm in peace he was met in Lower Lorraine, the Low Countries of later history, by a rebellion under its duke.

Normandy and Flanders.

In this rising Duke Godfrey was backed by two powerful neighbours, the count of Holland and the count of Flanders. It was probably in the spring of 1049, at the moment when Baldwin of Lille announced by daring outrages his defiance of the Emperor, that a demand for his daughter's hand reached him from the court of Rouen. In itself the demand was natural enough. William had been pressed by his baronage to take a wife; and kinship alone might have drawn the duke to take her from the house of Flanders. It was no long time since Baldwin the Bearded, the present Count Baldwin's father, had married in his old age a daughter of Richard the Good, a

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cousin of William as of the English Eadward, and her presence at the court of Bruges would aid in the promotion of further alliances. But we can hardly doubt that political interest had more weight with William than the thought of kinship. A marriage with Matilda of Flanders would strengthen his hold on France, whose growing jealousy formed one of his greatest difficulties. Matilda's mother, Adela, was a sister of King Henry; and the connexion between the courts of Paris and Bruges was of the closest kind. Even in a war with France the friendship of Flanders would cover the weakest side of the Norman frontier. But it is likely enough that England already occupied as large a part in William's plans as France. We can hardly doubt from his visit but two years later that dreams of an English crown were already stirring within him. And in any projects upon England it was of the highest import to secure the friendship of Flanders.

England and Flanders.

It was the more important that Baldwin's friendship seemed already to have been won by the great English house in which William must even now have discerned the main obstacle to his success. In seeking the alliance of the count of Flanders, Godwine was only following the traditional policy of the English kings. A common dread of the northmen had long held the two countries in close political connexion; and the marriage of a former Count Baldwin with Ælfth-

ryth,[1] the daughter of Ælfred, was part of a system of alliances by which Eadward the Elder and Æthelstan strove to bridle Normandy in its earlier days. Even when that dread of the northmen died away, a friendly intercourse went on between the two countries. It was at Count Arnulf's court that Dunstan sought refuge in his exile; and one of the archbishop's biographies is due to a Flemish scholar. Commerce too linked England with "Baldwin's land," as Flanders was generally styled. Bruges formed the great mart for the countries of the Lower Rhine; and the merchants of Bruges were seen commonly enough in the streets of London. Flemings indeed were among the strangers whose encouragement was laid as a fault to Eadgar's charge. In the later days of Æthelred the political relations between the two countries became of a less friendly kind. It was from a Flemish harbour that Cnut steered to English shores, and it was at Bruges that Emma and Harthacnut planned their invasion of England. But aid to Harthacnut and Emma was less offensive to Eadward than it would have been to Harald Harefoot, and even the reception of some Danish pirates in the Scheldt, with English booty on board, was hardly of weight enough to prevent the renewal of the old English friendship during the Confessor's reign.

The friendship was at this time drawn closer

[1] See vol. i. p. 203.

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The policy of William.

by the relations between Baldwin and the real ruler of England. A formal alliance by which Godwine and the count were bound to each other was of old standing; and it had been sedulously strengthened on the earl's part by repeated gifts. The terms on which the two houses stood had indeed been shown only a year before by the reception which Swein found at Baldwin's court. To break the connexion between the house of Godwine and the Flemish court, at any rate to neutralize its force, was of the first importance therefore for any success in after attempts upon England. The march of a Flemish army on Rouen, the appearance of a Flemish squadron off the Seine, would alike be fatal to any passage of the Channel by a Norman force. The friendship of Baldwin, on the other hand, would complete the schemes which William was already devising for securing the whole range of the coast from Brittany to the Scheldt. Count Ingelram of Ponthieu was the husband of the duke's sister. Eustace of Boulogne was linked to him by his marriage with King Eadward's sister, Godgifu or Goda, who had been reared like Eadward himself at the Norman court. With the hand of Matilda therefore the whole coast of the Channel would be secured. The advantages of the match indeed were to be far greater than any which William could now have counted on; it was the friendship of Flanders which in the end alone made the

Norman Conquest possible. But even now it was too marked a step to escape the watchful eye of such a statesman as Godwine; and we shall hardly do justice to his ability if we fail to trace his hand in the sudden and unlooked-for combination by which the Norman scheme was for a while rendered impossible.

Council of Rheims.

While William was seeking Matilda's hand at the court of Bruges, the new Pope, Leo the Ninth, and the Emperor Henry had together taken in hand their work of reform. Only twice before had the western world seen, never again was it destined to see, Pope and Cæsar united in the common rule of Christendom, united in the work of temporal peace and of religious reformation. The aim of the council which was summoned to meet them at Rheims was to restore at once the tranquillity of the Empire and the discipline of the Church. The first was indeed in great part secured. Leo had already launched his excommunication at the rebel princes, and though Baldwin of Flanders still remained defiant, the Lotharingian duke Godfrey laid down his arms and submitted to penance for his sin. To bring spiritual peace to the Church needed longer toil. But England now seemed disposed to join in the task with Pope and Emperor. Bishop Duduc of Wells with two abbots appeared among the crowd of German and Burgundian bishops who answered Leo's summons to Rheims. The envoy was skilfully chosen.

Duduc was himself a German, a Saxon or Lotharingian in blood, fitted therefore by his extraction to deal with a German Pope and a German Emperor. His commission simply bade him bring back word to the king what was done for Christendom, but it is hard to watch the acts of the council without suspecting that behind this spiritual mission lay a political one.

Its political results.

The work of moral reform went hand in hand at Rheims with that of ecclesiastical reformation. Princes as well as bishops found themselves summoned to the bar of Christendom. But it is remarkable that in the front rank of these offenders we find the four rulers whom William's policy was drawing together along the Channel coast; and that in each case the crime laid to their charge was the same. Marriage contracted within the bounds of spiritual relationship was counted by the Church as incest; and so wide were these bounds, so numerous the modes in which this relationship could be contracted, that few offences were more difficult to evade. Incest was the ground on which Eustace of Boulogne and Ingleram of Ponthieu were alike excommunicated; but we are not told whether their Norman marriages were the ground of the condemnation. The projected marriage of Matilda was the crime which brought both William and Baldwin within the censure of the Church. Her mother Adela had been betrothed to William's uncle, the third Duke

Richard of Normandy, before her marriage with Baldwin; and such a betrothal created a spiritual affinity between the countess and the ducal house which may have served as the ground for the prohibition. But whatever was the obstacle, the marriage was counted incestuous, and William and Baldwin were alike forbidden to proceed with it on pain of excommunication.

Failure of William's schemes.

How far these acts of the council sprang from Duduc's prompting it is hard to say, but some light is thrown on the part which England was playing by the events which followed the close of the assembly. Its prohibition of the marriage was in any case a heavy blow to the Norman duke. But William showed no sign of submitting to the prohibition. Strict Churchman as he was, we shall see him clinging stubbornly to this project for years to come, and marrying Matilda in the end in defiance of the excommunication. Nor did the count of Flanders seem more likely to yield. In spite of Leo's thunders and the withdrawal of Duke Godfrey, Baldwin remained in arms. The emperor was forced to march against him; but Flanders required a fleet as well as an army for its reduction, and Henry called on England for naval aid. No request could have jarred more roughly against the traditional English relations with the Flemish courts, nor with the previous policy of Godwine himself; but the aid which Henry needed was at once granted, and the emperor no sooner

marched on Baldwin's frontier than English ships gathered under the king himself at Sandwich for a cruise off the coast of Flanders. Attacked by two such powers at once even Baldwin's heart failed him: and the count bowed without a struggle to the imperial demands. We can hardly doubt from the part which Henry had taken in the council at Rheims, that among these was that of submission to the decree which prohibited Matilda's marriage with William. It is at any rate certain that so long as Henry lived Baldwin withheld his daughter's hand from the Norman duke.

Godwine's alliance with Flanders.

Whether this decisive aid of England had been stipulated as the price of the council's intervention between the duke and the Flemish count it is impossible now to tell. But the result of both served Godwine's purpose too well to allow of a belief that he was strange to the real import of the policy he directed. At the close of 1049 the Flemish match seemed to be at an end. Baldwin however was no sooner severed from William than Godwine hastened to renew the friendly relations which his policy had for the moment interrupted. His aim was precisely that of the Norman duke. Like William, the earl resolved to bind Flanders to his interests by a marriage tie. But where the duke failed Godwine succeeded. How Baldwin was won, whether the match with Godwine's house was a condition of the withdrawal of the English

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fleet, we do not know, but the reconciliation was a rapid one. In little more than a year after the close of the war with Baldwin, Godwine's third son, Tostig, was wedded to Judith, the sister or daughter of the count of Flanders.

Outlawry of Swein.

No triumph could have been more complete than this diplomatic triumph of Godwine on foreign ground. He was now at the height of his power; the king of England was his son-in-law, Swein the king of Denmark was his nephew, and the count of Flanders was closely linked to his house. But in the very moment of his success new difficulties met him at home. While Eadward still lay at Sandwich the exiled Swein returned to seek pardon and restoration to the lands he had lost. Harold and Beorn, to whom these lands had been granted, for a time withstood his demand; but at a subsequent conference at Pevensey with Godwine and his cousin, Beorn was brought to consent, and he rode with Swein to serve as his mediator with the king. Again however the brutal nature of Godwine's eldest son broke out in crime. Beorn was treacherously seized, carried on shipboard, and murdered. The outrage roused the wrath of all. Swein was formally branded as "nithing," as utterly worthless, and was forsaken by the bulk of his own followers. The men of Hastings chased the two ships which still clung to him, captured them, and slew their crews. But Swein escaped to Baldwin's land, where the war

which Flanders was waging with England and the emperor at that moment secured him a refuge. He was soon to return. As the winter passed and peace between Flanders and England was again restored, Bishop Ealdred of Worcester, who had been raised to his see two years before in the very height of Godwine's power, appeared at the court of Bruges. Ealdred was an adroit negotiator, and he may possibly have been commissioned to bring about that new union of the count and earl which found its issue soon after in Tostig's marriage. He served at any rate another purpose of Godwine's. Early in 1050 he brought back Swein with him to England and made his peace with the king. The murderer's outlawry was reversed, and he was restored to his old rule over the shires of the west.

Godwine and the Primacy.

Such a restoration of such a criminal was an outrage to the general sense of justice which could hardly fail to weaken the cause of Godwine. But the earl's power remained unshaken; and ere the year ended the death of Archbishop Eadsige seemed about to raise it to a yet higher point. The vacancy of an English see, as of an English abbey, was at this time commonly filled by the direct nomination of the king in full Witenagemot; it was the king who "gave" the bishopric by formal writ and seal, who placed the bishop's staff in his hand, who sometimes personally enthroned him in his bishop's seat. But in some cases the royal

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nomination was preceded by an election on the part of the clergy or monks, with a petition to the king for its confirmation. On the death of Eadsige the latter course was followed. The Canterbury monks chose Ælfric, a kinsman of Godwine, for the vacant see; and Godwine supported with his whole power their prayer for his acceptance by Eadward. The choice of Ælfric was the last step in the steady process by which the earl was concentrating all power in the hands of his house. Already master of the State, the primacy of his kinsman made him master of the Church. The efforts of Eadward to provide a check on his influence by the elevation of Norman bishops broke idly against the overwhelming supremacy of an archbishop of Godwine's blood. Nor was this all. The constitutional position of the primate was even more important than his ecclesiastical position. He alone could lawfully set the crown on the head of an elected king. He alone had the right of receiving from the people their assent to the king's rule, of receiving from the sovereign his oath to govern rightly. The choice of Ælfric pointed plainly to Godwine's designs on the crown.

Robert of Jumièges.

If even a shadow of kingship were to remain to him Eadward was forced to resist. He can hardly have needed the whispers of his Norman courtiers to disclose the significance of Ælfric's election, or the influence of Robert of Jumièges

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to estrange him, as Godwine's friends murmured that Robert did estrange him from the earl. But once resolved on resistance the king acted with the violence of a weak man driven to stand at bay. The choice which he made was yet more anti-national than Godwine's own. If the primacy with its spiritual and political powers was no post for Godwine's kinsman, it was still less a post for a Norman stranger. But it was Robert of Jumièges whom the king named as archbishop in the Lenten Witenagemot of 1051. The new primate soon showed that his elevation was but the first blow in a strife which was from this moment assured. Spearhafoc, a partizan of Godwine, had been raised to the see of London as a means of counterbalancing the appointment to the primacy. Robert however hastened to Rome for his pallium and obtained from Pope Leo, probably on the usual plea of simony, a condemnation of Spearhafoc's choice. On the ground of this prohibition he refused on his return to consecrate the bishop, although he "came to him with the king's writ and seal." Spearhafoc, unhallowed as he was, defiantly took possession of his bishopric.

The Count of Boulogne.

As August wore away the quarrel grew more bitter. Godwine complained of the primate's intrigues against him; Robert complained of the earl's trespass on lands belonging to his see. A fresh cause of irritation was doubtless added by a visit of Eustace of Boulogne to the court at

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Gloucester. His coming was natural enough: he was wedded to the king's sister, and both he and his wife were endowed with wide estates in England. But it possibly had another end. The marriage of Tostig and Judith had just proclaimed to the world Godwine's triumph in Flanders; and Eustace, a near neighbour of Count Baldwin, a friend and ally of the Norman duke, was affected above all by this new turn in Flemish politics. But whether his visit was a result of this match or no, the sympathies of Count Eustace can hardly fail to have given fresh weight to the pressure which Robert was bringing to bear on the king against Godwine.

Outbreak of strife.

That the count of Boulogne was looked upon with hostility by Godwine's party, we see from the precaution which Eustace took of arming his men as he approached the earl's town of Dover on his return at the opening of September. His fears of a conflict were soon realized. One of his soldiers while roughly seeking lodgings wounded a burgher who refused them; the townsmen attacked the count; and after the fall of some twenty men on either side Eustace was driven from Dover and fled almost alone to Eadward. The king summoned Godwine in wrath from Tostig's marriage-feast, and bade him as earl of Wessex avenge the wrong done to his brother-in-law. With his usual skill Godwine seized on the opportunity which the demand gave him. A

contest was plainly at hand between Eadward and the earl; but the fight at Dover enabled him at once to take ground, not as an enemy of the king, but as an enemy of the foreigners who surrounded the king. He refused to attack his own people on a stranger's behalf; and with his sons, Swein and Harold, summoned the men of their three earldoms to follow him in arms. Fighting in fact at once broke out between Swein's men and the men of Earl Ralf in Herefordshire. For the moment the bold stroke promised to be successful. Eadward lay defenceless in the midst of Swein's earldom. The followers of the three earls immediately gathered at their call a few miles off Gloucester, in a force so "great and countless" as to show what careful preparation the house of Godwine had made beforehand for the blow. From his camp on the Cotswolds the earl demanded the surrender into his hands of Eustace and the Normans in Ralf's castle. But quick as had been Godwine's stroke, others were as quick as he. The earls of Mercia and Northumberland were doubtless on their way to the usual autumnal meeting of the Witan; but on the summons of the panic-struck king they called up the whole strength of their earldoms, and hurried with the smaller force about them to Gloucester.

Failure of Godwine's plans.

The approach of Leofric and Siward, with the men whom Ralf brought up from Herefordshire, changed the whole face of affairs. The surrender

of Count Eustace was at once refused, and as the Mercians and Northumbrians gathered round Eadward they clamoured to be led against Godwine and his sons. Dexterous as the earl's policy had been, it had utterly broken down. His aim had been to stand before England as the foe of strangers and not of the king. But the sudden rescue wrought by Siward and Leofric forced him, "loath" as he was, to stand boldly out in arms against Eadward himself; and it marks the power which the monarchy had now gained over the national sentiment, in great measure from Godwine's own policy and action, that the moment this attitude was fairly taken the earl's strength fell from him. But with the sentiment of loyalty was rising also the consciousness of national unity. The day had passed when Mercian or Northumbrian could shed West-Saxon blood as the blood of strangers. The wiser folk on both sides deemed it "unræd" or wisdom-lacking to join battle; "seeing that there was most that noblest was in England in the two hosts."

His flight.

Not less striking than the force of either sentiment was the new consciousness of national law. The great dispute was left to the judgment of the Witenagemot which was summoned on the twenty-first of September, so fast had events marched, at London. The two hosts were parted by the river; Godwine and his sons lay at Southwark; Eadward and the Mercian and Northumbrian earls encamped

on the northern shore. The Witan no sooner met than they gave an earnest of their coming judgment by the outlawry of Swein. The reversal of Godwine's worst deed showed what had most shaken his power over Englishmen; but Godwine still clung to his son. Outlaw as he now was, he kept Swein beside him. The earl trusted to the political skill which had rescued him from so many dangers, and Bishop Stigand of Winchester, one of his stoutest partizans, negotiated busily with the king. But while Stigand crossed and recrossed the river Godwine's host melted away; and a final summons to appear before the Witan drove him from Southwark. A sentence of outlawry on the part of the Witan and the host followed him in his flight over sea.

Its results.

The triumph of the king and of the primate was complete. Godwine with three of his sons, Swein, Tostig, and Gyrth, made their way to Baldwin's court. Two others, Harold and Leofwine, struck westward to Bristol and sailed thence to Dublin, where a native king, Dermot, was now lord alike of Irish and Danes. It is plain that the policy of the house of Godwine, closely linked as it was with the northmen through Gytha and her kindred, had secured a hold on these western seas by an alliance with the Danish Ostmen, as it secured a hold on the eastern channel through its alliance with Baldwin. The orders given to Bishop Ealdred of Worcester to seize Harold as he

fled mark the importance which the new government attached to this danger in the West; but his pursuers "might not or would not" overtake him. The cautious phrase of the chronicler shows that, if Swein's inlawing and Godwine's daring stroke for supremacy in the realm had brought about a national resistance, there was no bitter hostility against his house. The earl's flight, indeed, seems to have been unexpected; it is likely that many in the host at Westminster meant simply to back the king in his appeal against Godwine's last demands; and the sudden disappearance of the great minister who had so long stood at the head of English affairs struck a panic into men's hearts. Murmurs passed from lip to lip that the land was lost now the land's father was gone. We see the power of this sentiment in the moderation of the acts which followed Eadward's triumph. Godwine's daughter, indeed, the king's wife Eadgyth, was put away and sent to a monastery. The earldom of Swein was broken up, and while part of it fell to the king's nephew Ralf, a part of it, along with the western portion of Wessex, was placed under the rule of another kinsman of Eadward's, Odda. The East-Anglian earldom of Harold was given to Leofric's son Ælfgar. Spearhafoc was driven from the see he claimed, and one of the king's Norman chaplains, William, was raised to the bishopric of London. But we hear of no further reactionary measures; nor is there

any sign that, powerful as he now was, the Norman primate used his power to make England Norman. Neither Siward nor Leofric, indeed, were men to suffer their success to be turned to merely Norman uses; and his conduct in this hour of independence shows that Eadward had till now favoured the Norman group around him simply as a counterpoise to the oppression of Godwine.

William visits England.

But in one breast the fall of the house of Godwine must have raised hopes which, baffled as they were to be again and again, were never thenceforth to die. In the triumph of the earl's policy in Flanders William of Normandy had suffered the great defeat of his life. The marriage he had striven to bring about was denied him, while the marriage with Tostig bound Baldwin more firmly than ever to Godwine's house. But the fall of the earl opened chances of success in the aims which, we can hardly doubt, were now growing clearer before him. In the following Eastertide, 1051, "came Earl William from beyond sea with great following of Frenchmen; and the king welcomed him and so many of his fellows as seemed him good, and let him go again." There is something startling in the simple words which record the first landing of William on English shores. Of the import of his coming we are told nothing by the English chronicler. But the Norman knights of the duke's train brought back

tales to their own land of a fresh promise made to William by his royal kinsman that he would bequeath him his crown; and, true it is, the tale deepened the conviction of every Norman that England was soon to be his own.[1]

The plans of Godwine.

But Godwine was watching the turn of English feeling with other eyes than those of William. News of the popular panic at his flight must soon have reached him over sea; nor can we doubt that the great treasure which he carried to Flanders was lavished to support the sympathy felt for him in his exile, and to spur Baldwin to the efforts which we find the count making to induce Eadward to receive him again. But for months all was in vain. Winter and spring wore away, and still the king was stubborn in his refusal of pardon. At last Godwine girded himself to win his return by force. His first step was to free himself from the miserable son who had cost him so much. Brutal as Swein was, there is something pitiful in the tenacious affection with which Godwine had clung to him in spite of his crimes; but the earl saw at last that whatever welcome England might have for himself, it had no welcome for Swein. And his departure on a pilgrimage,

[1] Note the growth of the Norman convention from its beginning (1) with Eadward's accession and the rumoured promise of succession; (2) its progress with Primate Robert's visit to Rouen and promise; (3) and with William's visit to Eadward and promise. The very number of the promises throws grave doubt on the truth of any, but it shows the growing belief in the Norman pretensions.

in which he found his grave, removed the one great obstacle to Godwine's reconciliation with his country. Already friends were stealing over sea to Bruges, "happy to be exiles in his exile,"[1] while messages came from other friends who remained but called for his return, and pledged themselves to live and die with him.[2] Through the spring of 1052, Godwine was busy equipping a fleet in the Yser, while Harold gathered ships at Dublin, and when midsummer came all was ready. Eadward was still resolute against the earl; his own prayers and the embassies both of Baldwin and the French king, whose interposition again throws light on the wide reach of Godwine's political connexions, alike failed to move him; and a fleet and land force was gathered at Sandwich to meet his coming.

Return of Godwine.

The earl had already started, but his first attempt ended in utter failure, for he was driven back to Bruges by a storm, and for a month all seemed at an end. But the failure had given a false security to Eadward. At the beginning of September the king's fleet withdrew to London to refit, and at the moment when the coast lay open Eadward learnt that Harold had left Dublin

[1] Vita Edw. (ed. Luard), 404.

[2] "And during the time that he was here in the land, he enticed to him all the men of Kent, and all the butsecarls from Hastings and everywhere there by the sea-coast, and all the east end, and Sussex, and Surrey, and much else in addition thereto. Then all declared that they would live and die with him."—Eng. Chron. (Peterborough), a. 1052.

to join his father. The young earl turned into the Bristol Channel to make a descent on Porlock, and while the brutal ravages of his Danish shipmen woke the king's dread of an attack from the West, Harold's own ships rounded the Land's-End and entered the Channel. Godwine and his son met off the Isle of Wight, sailed eastward along the coast, and entered the Thames. The country rose as they advanced. Vessels put off from every little port they touched, manned by seamen who vowed to live and die with Godwine; and when the earl's fleet moored before London it far outnumbered the fifty vessels of the king. Eadward, however, was hardly less active and resolute than his foes, and a large force lay marshalled along the northern bank of the Thames. But Godwine was too consummate a statesman to derive success from mere force of arms. He stilled the wild outcry for battle which burst from his men, as the king delayed to give answer to the prayer of the earl for restoration to land and goods. Bloodshed would only part him irretrievably from the men with whom he fought; it would part him yet more irretrievably from the king. He anticipated the constitutional distinctions of later times in representing his enterprize as simply directed against evil counsellors. He protested his loyalty to the sovereign who had humbled and outlawed him, and who had outraged his honour in driving his daughter from his bed. "He would rather

die," he said, "than suffer aught to be done against his lord the king."

His restoration.

He knew, indeed, that a combat was needless. London was on his side. Negotiations had been going on long before his coming with its burghers; and now that his fleet appeared before it the Londoners declared for the earl. The blow was decisive. Eadward's own soldiers swore that they would not fight with men of their own kin, that they would not have the land given over to "outlandish men," to perish through the strife of its own children. But Eadward's counsellors had not waited for this mutiny of the host. The Norman nobles at once rode off westward to Earl Ralf's country. The Norman primate, with the Norman bishop of Dorchester, mounted and rode through London to the sea, their train cutting their way with difficulty through a crowd of young burghers, who would have held or slain them. Deserted and alone in the great Witenagemot which met on the morrow, the king was forced to accept Godwine's purgation from the charges brought against him, and to restore him and his house to all they had lost. His sons regained their earldoms; his daughter was brought back to the king's house. "And there outlawed they all Frenchmen that aforetime made unlaw, deemed ill-doom, and red unrede in the land."

Change in his position.

When the hosts which had gathered on either side the Thames streamed back to their homes,

the triumph of Godwine seemed complete. The king had been forced to give him the kiss of peace. His Norman rivals were in flight over sea. His old possessions were restored. The influence which had rested before on his own supreme ability, on long experience and possession of authority, on the gradual accumulation of lands and honours, on the annexation of province after province by his house, rested now on the basis of a national acceptance, of a recall and a restoration which the solemn decision of the Witenagemot approved as national acts. But the earl's keen eye could hardly fail to see that the revolution of 1051 had given a mighty shock to his power; even his restoration, triumphant as it was, failed to give back to his house its old supremacy. If Eadward had been beaten in his effort to ruin Godwine, he had shown what strength remained to the crown. If the two rival earls preferred Godwine to a Norman rule they were far from purposing to sink back into their old inferiority. The settlement which followed the earl's return throws light on the long negotiations which Bishop Stigand conducted with the Witan before the vote of Godwine's outlawry was recalled, and leaves little doubt that the fresh arrangement was one of mutual concession.

Godwine and Eadward.

The dignity of the crown was jealously preserved. In the very hour of his triumph Godwine strove to soften as far as he might Eadward's

humiliation. At the first sight of the king he flung down his arms and threw himself at Eadward's feet praying for the king's peace. It was only when Eadward yielded to his prayer and the prayer of the Witan that the earl took back his arms again from the king's hand and accompanied him into the palace. Even the change of the king's advisers remained a partial one. If Eadward was forced to abandon his Norman archbishop and the Norman advisers of Godwine's exile, a Norman court was still left to him. He remained surrounded by Norman stallers and chaplains, his writs were drawn by a Norman chancellor. Though the two kinsmen of the king had played a foremost part in the earl's overthrow they were left uninjured. French as he was, Ralf retained his earldom of the Magesætas. Odda, if he lost the earldom built up for him out of the western shires of Wessex, seems to have been compensated by the creation of an earldom of the Hwiccas out of the shires of Gloucester and Worcester.

Godwine and the Earls.

The same signs of compromise appeared in the new relations of Godwine with the rival earls. The house of Leofric had profited most by his fall. Whatever had been the steps of its growth, the Mercian earldom which had once been reduced to little more than three shires, Staffordshire, Cheshire, and Shropshire, now reached again eastward over Lincoln and stretched westward to Oxford and the Thames; and as if to build up

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again the old realm of Mid-Britain, Leofric's son Ælfgar had received at Eadward's hand Harold's earldom of East-Anglia. Siward, master of Northumbria from the Tweed to the Trent, for Nottinghamshire now passed into the Northumbrian earldom, was rewarded for his share in Godwine's overthrow by a part of the counties of Northampton and Huntingdon, a gift which served the political purpose of providing a barrier between the possessions of Leofric and his son. Such a division of England raised Leofric and Siward to a new equality with Godwine: but his submission to it was probably a part of the terms of his recall. Wessex returned to Godwine as of old; East-Anglia was also restored; but Leofric and Siward retained the possessions they had won.

Godwine and the Church.

In the settlement of Church matters there was a like spirit of compromise. Spearhafoc, the claimant whom Godwine had backed in his occupation of the see of London, disappeared; and the Norman bishop, William, returned as soon as the storm was over to his see. We hear nothing of Ælfric, the kinsman whom the earl had striven to raise to the primacy; but the question of the appointment to the see of Canterbury was too important a one for Godwine to yield. In the tumult which broke out when Eadward was forced to receive the earl back again, Archbishop Robert of Canterbury fled from London and crossed the Channel. His life indeed was in danger; his

knights had been forced to cut their way out of London; and a formal outlawry in the Witenagemot, on the ground that he and his Frenchmen had been foremost in making strife between Godwine and the king, followed him over sea. But Godwine was far from resting content with Robert's flight. The elevation of the Norman to the primacy had been the crowning defeat of that policy by which he was concentrating all power in State or Church in the hands of his house. And now that his power had returned, he fell back on his older plan. There had been recent instances of the deprivation of bishops by a sentence of the Witan: and though we have no record of such a step, we may gather that Robert was himself deprived of his see. It was given to Bishop Stigand of Winchester, whose action in the late contest marked him as an ardent partizan of the house of Godwine. Robert at once hastened to Rome to appeal against the intrusion of Stigand into his see. It was plain that the strife between the rival primates must widen into a strife between England and the papacy. No canonical power could be alleged for Robert's removal: and to churchmen generally the elevation of Stigand could seem nothing but a defiance of all ecclesiastical law. In Normandy sympathy for the exiled archbishop was naturally even keener. The memory of the slaughter of Normans by Englishmen at the seizure of Ælfred was quickened by tales of

the slaughter of Normans on Godwine's return. The driving out of the Norman prelates, the outlawry of the Norman courtiers, were taken as outrages to the Norman name, and the elevation of Stigand remained as the most galling sign of Godwine's triumph.

Character of Godwine.

This triumph however was the last which Godwine was to win. His long administration was fast drawing to its close, and the sickness which was soon to end his life seems to have fallen on him immediately after his restoration. But alike in his overthrow and his success he had shown the qualities which had so long placed him at the head of the State. It is in the transitional moments of a nation's history that it needs the cool prudence, the sensitive selfishness, the quick perception of what is possible, which distinguished the adroit politician whom the death of Cnut had left supreme in England. Living in a time of transition he was himself a fit representative of his time; his birth disputed, his connexions Danish, his policy English, a skilled warrior, but statesman rather than warrior, and administrator rather than conqueror. Beginning as a royal favourite, he died the "land-father" of the English people; from the court dependant he passed insensibly into the patient statesman; on the one side he appeared a grasping noble, on the other a wise ruler. The first great lay statesman of English history, he owed his elevation neither to

hereditary rank nor to ecclesiastical position, but to sheer ability; the first minister who overawed the crown, his pliability, his good temper, his quick insight, his caution, and his patience, showed that he possessed the qualities of the adroit courtier. Shrewd, eloquent, an active administrator, Godwine united vigilance, industry, and caution, with a singular dexterity in the management of men. In the range of politics indeed he was unfettered by scruples. His deadness to the religious sentiment of his day was shown by the way in which he held aloof from the ecclesiastical and monastic revival of the time, and by his support of Stigand, unworthy as he was, from political motives. His indifference to the moral judgments of the men about him found expression in whatever share he may have had in the murder of Ælfred, and in his steady adherence to the son whose crimes had openly outraged public feeling. His far-reaching ambition and keen selfishness were seen in the aggrandizement of his house, and in the vast wealth at his command, as well as in his dexterous use of it. But in spite of this absence of moral sympathy, his fertility of conception, the range of his designs, the quietness of his strokes, his dogged perseverance, and his coolness and self-command in success, added to his long administrative experience, left him without a rival in the conduct of government. His policy both abroad and at home marked the daring and

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originality of his genius. In foreign affairs he was the first among English statesmen whose diplomacy and international policy had a European breadth, and concerned itself alike with Scandinavia, the Empire, the Papacy, France, Flanders, and the Irish Ostmen. At home his government was one of peace, for warrior as he had been in his youth, he was absolutely without military ambition, and sought only political success. It was nevertheless in this field of home politics that the transitional character of his genius most truly asserted itself. Holding down feudalism, yet himself aiming at a great feudal revolution, building up in the council-chamber the power of the crown, yet himself turning the king into a puppet, he was the creator of a wholly new policy. He was the first to develop in the people at large a common interest in the English nation, an interest stronger even than the instinct of allegiance to the house of Cerdic; and the new "loyalty" which was thus his creation strengthened the authority of the crown, even while it superseded the king. The true work of Godwine lay in the building up of the English people, the awakening of a new loathing of foreigners and of a new sense of kinship, and the gathering of the nation into that brotherhood which looked to him as the "land-father."

(*The following notes on the Growth of the Royal Administration have been drawn up from some fragmentary papers, very rough and imperfect, and wholly unrevised.*)

In the history of the royal administration three stages are distinctly marked, each of which indicates a fresh step in the progress of the kingly rule. In the time of Ælfred the great officers of the court were the four heads of the royal household, the Hordere, the Staller, the Dish-thegn, and the Cup-thegn. Under Æthelred the appointment of the High-reeve shows the first effort of the crown to create a minister of state. Finally, in the reign of Cnut we may trace the beginnings of that administrative body which was to become so important under the Confessor, the Clerks of the Chapel, or the "King's Chaplains."

The four officers of the early West-Saxon court are at least as old as Ælfred, and, whether borrowed or not in their actual form from the Frankish court, sprang naturally from the needs of the king's household for its inner regulation and finance, for its movements through the country, and for its commissariat. The Hordere was the officer of the court in its stationary aspect, as the Staller or Constable was of the court on progress; while the hardly less important functions of the commissariat of this moving army were shared between the Steward and the Butler.

But of the four officers one only retained under the later West-Saxon monarchy any real power. The dish-thegn and cup-thegn lost importance as the court became stationary and no longer maintained a vast body of royal followers. The staller retained only the functions of leading in war as the feudal constable, which in turn passed away with later changes in the military system. The hordere alone held a position of growing importance.

The búr-thegn, camerarius cubicularius; the hrægel-thegn, or keeper of the wardrobe; the dispensator, thesaurarius, hordere, are all grouped by Kemble ("Sax. in Eng." ii. 106) as names for the same great officer. The first instances given by him are Ælfric thesaurarius, under Ælfred, Æthelsige camerarius, under Eadgar, and Leofric hrægel-thegn, under Æthelred. No doubt the "Hoard" contained not only money and coin, but the costly ornaments and robes of the crown. Of all the officers of the court he was far the most important, (1) as head of the whole royal service; (2) as exercizing control over the royal palace or household wherever it might be, and charged with care, "de honestate palatii seu specialiter ornamento regali"; (3) as receiver of royal dues for the crown-lands, and head of the royal gerefan ("we may presume that he had the general management of the royal property, as well as the immediate regulation of the household. In this capacity he may have been the recognized chief of the cyninges tungerefan, or king's bailiffs, on the several estates; for we find no traces of any districtual or missatic authority to whom these officers could account," Kemble, "Saxons in Eng." ii. 106); (4) as "dispensator" of the crown; and (5) through this, and in his charge "de donis annuis militum," as head of the household troops; and (6) of the budding diplomatic service through his care "de donis diversarum legationum" (Hincmar 22, ap. Kemble, "Sax. in Eng." ii. 106). If under the changing conditions of the West-Saxon monarchy the importance of the Hordere in some of these officers declined, if his control over the household became less important, and his headship of the royal troops passed into other hands, and his charge of the royal demesnes practically ended with the commutation into money-rents of the dues derived from them, he found his importance as treasurer growing at every change in the system of finance, and in

the organization of the exchequer in its judicial as well as fiscal development.

A second stage in the progress of kingly rule was marked by the creation under Æthelred of the High-reeve, the first effort of the crown to create a minister of state, a deputy of its executive and judicial power beside the hereditary ealdorman, etc. Fiercely opposed, this institution became permanent under Cnut in the "vice-royalty" of Godwine; under the Confessor in that of Harold; and from it under the Norman kings sprang the Justiciar. With the consolidation of the royal administration, there went on no doubt a corresponding development of the royal justice in the shape of appeals to the king himself from subordinate jurisdictions; and the growing pressure of this may have been the cause, if not of the institution of the Secundarius under Cnut, at any rate of the continuance of this great officer under a king like the Confessor who needed no vice-gerent through absence from his realm, as it was certainly the cause of the change of his name under the Norman kings to that of Justiciar. It was thus the origin of the three great divisions of the "king's court" with their staff of officers, while its executive functions passed to the offspring of the third body of ministers whose origin dates from the foreign kings of England, the clerks of the royal chapel.

The Royal Chapel marks the third stage in ministerial organization. The high-reeve indeed early turned into a power which overawed the crown, and the rapid extension of the sphere of the "capellani" may mark a side of the struggle for the independence of the crown. The king's chaplains are first seen as a body under Cnut, but rapidly mount into power under the Confessor, when the "king's writ," issued through them, begins to be the efficient organ of the royal will throughout the realm. From their head, the chancellor, comes our equitable court of justice, from

the rest our secretaryships of state, with the whole fabric of modern administration. The system had its origin in lands whose circumstances differed from those of England. In Frankish and other Continental courts, where the customary Teutonic law had to be worked side by side with a Roman written law, the Roman clerk (apocrisiarius, referendarius, cancellarius) was needed to decide whether orders were accordant to law or not (Kemble, "Sax. in Eng." ii. 114), or conflicted with the written jurisprudence, and to affix or withhold the royal signet accordingly. No such need, however, existed in England, and the presence of the royal chaplains, with their head the chancellor, may be best accounted for by administrative reasons ; indeed, their institution coincides with the new class of royal writs which came in from the early years of Cnut's reign, issued by the king's personal authority without any confirmation by the Witan. In the first appearance of the chancery under Cnut we see traces of a Lotharingian organization, in the persons of foreign chaplains whose presence was probably due to their foreign training, and to the experience they may have brought of the Imperial chancery. Eadsige (Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 193, on his elevation to the archbishopric under Harald) the later archbishop of Canterbury, and Stigand the priest of Assandun (Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 199 ; he was chaplain to Harald), who were among the chaplains, were indeed Englishmen. Wythmann, however, to whom Cnut in his early days gave the abbacy of Ramsey, was "Teutonicus natione" (Hist. Rames., Gale, iii. 404.) So Duduc ("De Lotharingiâ oriundus," Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 218 ; "natione Saxo," Hunter, "Eccl. Doc." p. 15) was at the close of Cnut's reign, in 1033, bishop of Wells, and in high favour with the king. The manors of Banwell and Congresbury were "possessiones quas hæreditario jure a rege ante episcopatum promeruerat"

(Hunter, "Eccl. Doc." p. 15), and he seems in some way to have held the abbacy of Gloucester. He was probably therefore a "capellanus." Hermann, who was made bishop of the Wilsætas in the first years of the Confessor's reign, had probably been inherited by him from his Danish predecessors, and may have belonged to this early group of foreign chaplains. To the same group would belong Leofric who (if Florence is right) must have been Reginbold's predecessor ("Regis cancellario Leofrico Brytonico mox Cridiatunensis et Cornubiensis datus est præsulatus," Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 199). Now, Leofric was "apud Lotharingos altus et doctus" (Will. Malm. "Gest. Pontif." p. 201 (Hamilton). Cnut's alliance with Conrad may have had some influence in his choice of Lotharingian clerks. This alliance went on between Eadward and Henry; the intrigues and negotiations before the Council of Rheims may be connected with these Lotharingians entering the chapel.

Under the Confessor the Royal Chapel underwent marked changes alike in its organization and in its character. From 1045 we find a chancellor at the head of the clerks holding the royal seal which Eadward first brought into use in England; while the uniform tenour of the writs, and the replacing of the old English writing in the royal documents by the light French hand in use among foreign clerks, alike point to some new arrangement of the secretarial work, and more exact organization of the chancery on foreign models. From this moment also we meet with almost exclusively foreign names, and these no longer names of Lotharingians, but of Normans. The group of Lotharingians who had served under Cnut seems indeed to have been wholly broken up. Duduc had even in Cnut's time been rewarded by the see of Wells; Hermann was in 1045 appointed by Eadward to the bishopric of the Wilsætas; and in the same year Leofric was made bishop of Devonshire and

Cornwall. It is possible that the promotion of Hermann and Leofric was designed to clear the way for the French chancery that now took the place of the Lotharingian, the members of which must have been so closely connected with Godwine's policy since the days of Cnut; and that this new organization of the royal chapel, following so soon on the appointment of Robert of Jumièges to the see of London (in 1044), marks an important step in Eadward's opening struggle with the earl.

The earliest signatures given by Kemble ("Sax. in Eng." ii. 115) date from 1045, *i.e.* from the opening of the strife between the king and Godwine—a significant date. They are those of Hermann capellanus (Flor. Worc. a. 1045); Wulfwig cancellarius (Cod. Dip. 779); Reginboldus sigillarius (Cod. Dip. 810); Reginboldus cancellarius (Cod. Dip. 813, 824, 825, 891); with a staff of the same date, Ælfgeat notarius (Cod. Dip. 825), Petrus capellanus (*ibid.* 813, 825), Baldwinus capellanus (*ibid.* 813), Osbernus capellanus (*ibid.* 825), Robertus capellanus (*ibid.* 825). Then, in 1047, Florence gives Heca as chaplain, afterwards bishop of Selsey; and, in 1049, Florence also notes Ulf as chaplain, who became bishop of Dorchester in 1051; Cynesige as chaplain, afterwards archbishop of York; and William, 1051, bishop of London (for these Kemble gives no signatures). Two other names are from Florence: Godmann, chaplain in 1053, and Gisa in 1060. It may be that this organization of the chancery or chapel marks Eadward's first period; his struggle with Godwine, and the foreign names of the staff, would suggest this idea. Godwine's triumph may have given a temporary blow to this new administrative scheme, for Kemble notes two chaplains, Cynesige and William, as signing in 1051, but none after, save Gisa in 1060 (Kemble, "Sax. in Eng." ii. 116).

The charter in which Wulfwig figures as "regiæ dignitatis cancellarius" (Cod. Dip. 779) is noted by

Mr. Freeman as "doubtful." He afterwards succeeded Ulf as bishop of Dorchester. The group therefore really begins with the Norman Reginbold. Reginbold "appears in Domesday (180*b*) by the description of 'Reinbaldus Canceler' as holding lands in Herefordshire T.R.E." . . . After the Conquest "he still held lands in Berkshire (56*b*, 60, 63), Gloucestershire (166*b*), and Wiltshire (68*b*), if he is, as he doubtless is, the same as 'Reinbaldus de Cirencestre' and 'Renbaldus presbyter.' He was dean of Cirencester (Ellis, i. 398), and besides his lay fees he held several churches in Wiltshire (Dom. 65*b*)." (Freeman, "Norm. Conq." ii. 357, 358.) The permanence of the new organization is shown by his remaining with his fellows after the restoration of 1052. Thus he signs the Waltham charter as "regis Cancellarius," with Peter and Baldwin as king's chaplains (Cod. Dip. 813). Of the notary Ælfgeat I find no other notice. Peter and Baldwin, as we see, remained in the chancery with Reginbold to the end of the reign, when Baldwin became abbot of S. Edmundsbury (Freeman, "Norm. Conq." ii. 586. "He had been a monk of S. Denis, a certain presumption, though not amounting to proof, of his French origin"). Before his abbacy of S. Eadmund's he had been prior of Earl Odda's church at Deerhurst. (See charter in Monast. iv. 665. On Abbot Leofstan's illness, King Eadward "Baldwinum, S. Dionysii monachum, ejus artis peritum, dirigendum curavit."—Will. Malm. "Gest. Pontif." (Hamilton), p. 156.) Osbern's name indicates his Norman blood, but I know no more of him. Robert is of course the abbot of Jumièges, and probably the real mover in the whole matter. Promotion, indeed, to sees did not necessarily vacate the ministerial post, for Robert begins to sign as bishop of London in 1046 (Cod. Dip. 784), but this see would leave him free to assist in the chancery. Ulf too must have been added

to it soon after 1045, for in 1049, when named to Dorchester, he is described as the king's "preoste" (Eng. Chron. (Ab.), 1049), and "regis capellanus" (Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 203). William, too, who is named "chaplain of the king" (Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 207), on his promotion to London in 1051, must have been introduced into the chancery after 1045, perhaps taking Robert's place on his rise to the primacy.

Gisa alone among these later chaplains was a Lotharingian; he was appointed bishop of Wells in 1060. His solitary figure cannot have materially changed the French aspect of the chancery throughout Eadward's reign. The fact that Walter, the Lotharingian who at the same time became bishop of Hereford, was Eadgyth's chaplain, may show that clerks were again being brought from this quarter, or simply be a part of the Lotharingian traditions of Godwine's house as shown by Adelhard and Harold.

[Dr. Stubbs has pointed out to me another foreign chaplain of Eadward's of whom we find mention elsewhere. "Helinandus, vir admodum pauperis domus et obscure progenitus, literaturâ pertenuis et persona satis exilis, cum per notitiam Gualteri comitis Pontisarensis, de cujus comitatu gerebat originem, ad gratiam Eadvardi Anglorum Regis pertigisset (uxor enim sua cum prædicto comite sibi necessitudinem nescio quam creârat), capellanus ejus fuit, et quia Francicam elegantiam nôrat, Anglicus ille ad Francorum Regem Henricum eum sæpius destinabat." (Guibertus de Novigento "De Vitâ suâ," lib. iii. c. 2, Opera, ed. D'Achery, p. 496.) King Henry made him bishop of Laon (*Ibid.*) in 1052; he died in 1098 (Gallia Christiana, vol. ix. col. 524, 525). The second bishop of Laon after Helinandus had also been in the service of a king of England, but this must have been Henry I. (Guibertus "De Vitâ suâ," lib. iii. c. 4, ed. D'Achery, p 299).—A. S. G.]

CHAPTER XI

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

1053–1071

In the revolution which restored Godwine to power nothing is more remarkable than the inaction of William the Norman. To the duke, we can hardly doubt, the sudden success of Godwine was a bitter disappointment. The overthrow of his hopes was complete. Whatever promises Eadward may have made to him, he could hardly look for their fulfilment save with the aid of the Normans at Eadward's court, and the Norman court-party had been broken up. The Norman archbishop was driven over sea, and the duke was not less likely than his people to resent the wrong done to the primate. The Norman knights who found a refuge with the Scot king soon fell beneath the axes of Siward's hus-carls. How bitter a sense of disappointment lingered in Norman hearts we know from the fire which the memory of these events kindled when, a few years later, William

Difficulties of William.

called Normandy to avenge them. Nor was the temper of the duke such as to brook easily disappointment. But wroth as he might be, it was impossible to attack England with Flanders at her back. The overthrow of William's schemes for a Flemish marriage by Godwine's dexterous negotiations with Pope and Emperor still tied the duke's hands. From the moment of the council, whether Baldwin called on William to fulfil his pledge in vain or no, the courts of Bruges and of Rouen steered apart again. Baldwin fell back on his old alliance with the house of Godwine. The marriage of Judith with Tostig announced his change of policy, and promised to bind the earl and the count inseparably together. The fall of Godwine only brought out into clearer light the friendship of Flanders. It was in Flanders that the earl found refuge in his exile. It was from Bruges that his intrigues with his English supporters were carried on. His fleet was gathered in the Scheldt, and Flemish seamen were mingled with his own. William, with his own duchy still ill in hand and France watching jealously across his southern border, knew well that the estrangement of Baldwin barred any hope of attack over sea. Nor was this estrangement the least weighty of the dangers which threatened William at home, for the hostility of such a neighbour was sure to stir into life the smouldering discontent of the Norman baronage.

We see the duke's consciousness of this danger

His marriage.

from the step on which he ventured with a view of dispelling it. While Robert of Jumièges was still pleading at the papal court, William, by an act as daring as Godwine's, placed himself in opposition to the Papacy and the moral sense of Christendom. If he now claimed again the hand of Matilda it was with a full foresight of the difficulties in which such a marriage was to plunge him. The prohibition of Pope Leo was the most formidable of the obstacles in his way. But in 1053 Pope Leo was a prisoner in the hands of the Normans, who were founding a state in Southern Italy; and William seized the opportunity to wed Baldwin's daughter. But if Leo was a prisoner the Church was free, and the duke at once found himself face to face with the religious censure of the world about him. Rome laid the duchy under interdict. The archbishop of Rouen, his uncle Malger, threatened William with excommunication. His own counsellor, the prior of Bec, openly opposed the marriage. Lanfranc was now the foremost scholar of Western Christendom; and his disapproval was weightier than even the thunders of the Papacy. It stung William to the quick. In a wild burst of wrath he bade his men burn a manor-house of Bec to the ground and drive out Lanfranc from Norman land. In his haste to see his orders carried out the duke overtook the Italian hobbling on a lame horse towards the frontier. He angrily bade him hasten, and Lanfranc replied by a cool promise to go faster

out of his land if he would give him a better steed. "You are the first criminal that ever asked gifts from his judge," retorted William; but a burst of laughter told that his wrath had passed away, and duke and prior drew quietly together again. Wise or unwise, Lanfranc saw that it was too late to withstand the Flemish match; and William knew well that no persuasion in Christendom could do so much to win over the Papacy to forgiveness as that of the prior of Bec. Lanfranc made his way to Rome and sought for a dispensation. But six years of tedious negotiation passed away and William remained unpardoned, while the censures of the Church woke into fresh life every element of hostility within and without his land. The old cry of bastardy was heard once more. The old claims of rival branches of the ducal house woke again to life. Revolts of his kinsmen, William of Eu and William of Arques, revealed the existence of a widespread plot among the Norman nobles; and these were hardly trodden out before France itself drew the sword.

Victory of Mortemer.

King Henry was still bent on the policy of balance which held one feudatory at bay by help of another. A few years back, when Geoffrey Martel threatened his crown, he had relieved himself of the pressure of the Angevin by alliance with the Norman duke. He now resolved to break the power of Normandy by an alliance with the Angevin. After fruitless aid to the Norman rebels

the king himself took the field. One French army marched from Beauvais on Normandy to the right of the Seine; another under Henry himself advanced from Mantes on the duchy to the left of the river. The aid which came to the invader from Chartres and Aquitaine, from the men of Rheims and Laon, as from the burghers of Tours and Blois, shows how widely the greatness of William had revived the old hatred of the Normans. But the number of his assailants only heightened William's triumph. To meet the double attack the Norman forces were parted in two divisions, William himself leading the southern army, which defended the country between the Seine and the Oise, while four of the barons headed a body which guarded the land between the Seine and the Bresle. It was the last which first encountered the invaders. The French army under Henry's brother, Odo, and Count Guy of Ponthieu, which penetrated into the country about Aumale, had taken up its quarters in the little town of Mortemer, when it was surprised by the Norman onset. The town was set on fire, the French were slain as they hurried from its streets, and the whole army forced back in utter rout across the border. At night the news reached William as he lay with his host fronting Henry on the Seine. The cool craft and grim humour which underlay his dauntless courage showed itself in the use he made of the victory. Ralf of Toesny

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was sent to climb a tree in the neighbourhood of the king's camp, and at dawn the Frenchmen heard him shouting the famous words which still live in the verse of Wace, "Up, Frenchmen, up; you sleep too long; go bury your brothers that lie dead at Mortemer!" Panic spread with the news through the invading army, and before the sun was high its tents were in a blaze, and Henry was hurrying in retreat towards Paris. He purchased the release of the French barons who lay in William's prisons by a peace which was concluded in 1055, and which left William free to deal with Geoffrey of Anjou. The capture of Count Guy in the battle of Mortemer had enabled William to exact an acknowledgment of his lordship over Ponthieu as the price of liberation; and a march from Domfront now won a like acknowledgement from the lord of Mayenne. His submission carried William still further in the process of aggrandizement which was tearing the Maine country bit by bit from the grasp of Anjou.

Earl Harold.

While William was thus fighting against odds in his own land he was in no case to hinder the triumph of Godwine or Godwine's house in lands over sea. Godwine indeed was fated to reap little from the victory he had won. Soon after his return he began to sicken, and in April, 1053, he suddenly fell speechless at the king's board. With his death Harold became earl of the West-Saxons. The death of Godwine indeed strengthened the

position of his house. It at once changed its whole relation to the king. Whatever stain of Ælfred's blood lay on Godwine, none lay on his sons. Eadward had no galling sense that he owed them his crown, or that he had failed in a struggle to break their power. The earl's children had grown up in the king's court; they were his wife's kinsmen, and they seem to have shared the awe of the king's saintliness which was becoming general about them. From this time therefore Eadward's antipathy died gradually away. The wife whom he had discarded a year before won his affection. Tostig became his almost inseparable companion in chase or palace. Harold, if less cherished than his brother, was still regarded with favour. He took his father's place as the king's counsellor, but he was careful to hide the fact of his supremacy under demonstrations of loyal obedience to the king. "He always faithfully obeyed his rightful lord in word and deed," says the singer of Eadward's death song, "nor left unheeded what was needful to his king." Over England, no doubt, the young earl's name exercized at first less command than his father's. But soon England saw with relief a ruler who brought with him no dark memories of the past, who had not stood by the invader's side at Assandun, whose first rise had not sprung from the favour of a foreign king, the sense of whose greatness was not dashed by suspicions of an Ætheling's murder or by tolerance of Swein's crimes.

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1053-1071.
His character.

Nor was Harold to prove himself wholly unworthy of the singular fortune which gave king and people alike peacefully into his hands. Born about 1021, in the opening of Cnut's reign, he was now in the prime of life and vigour, a tall, comely man, robust of frame, courteous and conciliatory, in temper a typical Englishman, indifferent to abuse, gifted with a cool self-command. Morally he rose in some points above his father's level; he was gentler in mood, more tolerant of opposition, more prone to forgive; he had far greater sympathy with English religion and English culture. He had inherited from Godwine an equal capacity for council and for war; he showed himself, in the years that followed, an active soldier and a skilful administrator. But in political ability he fell greatly below his father. Of the far-reaching statesmanship which had been Godwine's characteristic, of his capacity for wide combinations, of his foresight, his resource, the quickness with which he understood the need of change, and the moment for changing, Harold had little or none. But he was loyal to the policy of his house, and his patient, steady temper was as fitted as that of his father for gradually winning back the power which the revolution of 1051 had shaken. As yet no dreams of any higher ambition seem to have visited the mind of Harold; his first political act indeed was to co-operate with Eadward in providing for the

succession to the crown. All hope that the king would beget children by Eadgyth had now passed away; and, whether they were true or false, whispers from over sea of a promise to William of Normandy would spur the West-Saxon earl to a settlement of the question. The king's nearest kinsman was living in a far-off land. Two infant children of Eadmund Ironside had found a refuge from Cnut, nearly forty years back, in Hungary; and one of them, the king's nephew Eadward, was still living there with his son Eadgar, and his daughters Margaret and Christina. Eadward resolved to call the Ætheling home and own him for his heir; and in 1054 Bishop Ealdred was sent on this errand to the imperial court.

Harold's policy in Mercia.

Hungary, however, was now at war with the empire, and after waiting a year at Cologne, Ealdred was forced to return and leave the plan to be carried out in more peaceful times. Conciliatory, however, as was his demeanour towards the king, Harold clung steadily to his father's policy of gathering England and its earldoms into the hands of his house. But we trace the caution and subtlety of his temper in the arrangements which followed on Godwine's return and death. The great Northumbrian earldom remained to Siward; the great West-Saxon earldom was taken by Harold himself. The policy of Godwine, as we have seen, had been to break up the Mercian

earldom till the province of Leofric was reduced to little more than Cheshire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire. But the death of Beorn, the exile of Swein, and the revolution of 1051 had done much to build up again the central earldom. Mid-Britain and Lincolnshire seem now to have become attached to Leofric, and Mercia may have already stretched southward again as far as Oxford, while Harold's old earldom of East-Anglia had gone to Leofric's son Ælfgar. But the annexation of Nottinghamshire to Northumbria deprived Mercia of its hold on the Trent, and ran a block of strange territory into the heart of Leofric's earldom; the grant of Huntingdonshire and Northamptonshire to Siward barred all contact between the possessions of Leofric and his son; while Mercia was cut off from the Severn and the Welsh by the retention of Ralf in his earldom of the Magesætas or Herefordshire, and the assignment, as seems likely, of the Hwiccas of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire to Odda, in compensation for his loss of western Wessex. By these adroit arrangements the assent not only of Siward and the king's kinsmen was secured to Harold's elevation, but even the Mercian house was won over, while its real power of action remained dexterously fettered.

And in North-umbria.

In the course of the following year, however, the death of the earl of Northumbria set Harold more free to carry forward his father's plan of

absorbing all England within the rule of his house. Never had Siward's name been so great as in his later years. His energetic action had done much to displace Godwine; and if he consented to the earl's return it was doubtless not without a price. At any rate the year 1053 brought his continuous rule southward as far as the Trent in Nottinghamshire, and planted him in Mid-Britain as earl of Northampton and Huntingdon, making his power such as might well balance that of the house of Godwine. Another part of the price may possibly have been the assent of Godwine and Harold to a declaration of war on the Scot kingdom, to which Siward was urged alike by ambition and by family ties. Under the rule of Duncan the Scot kingdom had sunk low. The Orkney jarls had become masters of the Western Isles, of Caithness, and of the whole western coast to Galloway. The Mormær, or under-king of Moray, was practically independent in the north. The weakness of Duncan himself was fatally shown by the failure of the earlier attack which he had made on Northumbria, in spite of his close connexion by marriage with its earls. In 1040, a year before the extension of Siward's power beyond the limits of Deira, Duncan made a fruitless raid as far as Durham; the burghers beat him back from the walls, and the Scots owed their safety to their horses, while Scottish heads hung round the battlements of the city. Immediately after this defeat,

Duncan was slain by his subjects, and Macbeth, the Mormær of Moray, to whose charge the crime was laid, mounted the Scottish throne, while Duncan's two sons sought refuge with the Northumbrian earl. Though the rise of Macbeth seems to have marked a political revolution, the troubles of England, and it may be the jealousy of Godwine, had till now stood in the way of Siward's action. But as the boys grew to manhood the ties of kinship told on Siward,[1] while the political advantages to which such a kinship might be turned may have influenced Eadward and Harold.

Death of Siward.

A new cause for action had now made itself felt. The flight of a body of Normans to the Scottish court on Godwine's return from exile forced on the struggle. The power of Macbeth had been doubled by his close alliance with the Orkney jarls, and his reception of the Normans threatened danger to the English realm. It was "by the king's order" that Siward marched over the border to fight Macbeth. The danger was soon dispelled. In 1054 a Northumbrian fleet appeared off the Scottish coast, and a Northumbrian army met Macbeth and his Orkney allies in a desperate battle. The English victory was com-

[1] Duncan must have been closely connected with the Northumbrian earls; for he was the father of these two boys by a wife whom Fordun (iv. 44) calls "consanguinea Siwardi comitis." As this marriage was before 1040 the kinship must have come about through Siward's wife, Earl Ealdred's daughter.

plete; the Normans were cut to pieces, and Macbeth fled to his Norse allies to perish after four years of unceasing struggle with Duncan's son, Malcolm, whom Siward placed on the Scottish throne. But the English loss was heavy. Many of the hus-carls, both of Siward and of the king, lay on the field. There too fell his son, Osbeorn, and his sister's son, Siward. "Were his wounds in front or behind him?" Siward was said to have asked at the news of Osbeorn's fall, and when assured that all were in front, to have said he wished no other end, either for Osbeorn or himself. But while Macbeth escaped, Siward was forced to fall back to prepare a fresh attack. His end however was near. Early in the next year, 1055, he died at York.[1] Legend told how, as sickness grew on him in the year after his victory, the earl called for his arms and stood harnessed to meet the call of death. "It was shame," he said, "for warrior to die like a cow!"[2] At Galmanho, in a suburb of York, he had reared a minster to St. Olaf,[3] and there he lay buried. The church grew into the great abbey of St. Mary, but a parish church beside it still preserves Olaf's name.

Tostig in Northumbria.

The death of Siward, and the old age of Leofric, who was now drawing to the grave, removed the

[1] Eng. Chron. 1055.
[2] Hen. Huntingdon (Arnold), pp. 195, 196.
[3] Eng. Chron. 1055.

check which their power had laid alike on Godwine and his son since the earl's return. The moment was come for undoing all that the revolution of 1051 had done; and Harold took up again his father's policy of gathering England, province by province, into the hands of his house. Siward had left but a boy, Waltheof, too young to bridle the rough men of the north; and passing over this child, Harold, in 1055, set his brother Tostig as earl over the Northumbrians. The step was a weighty one, not only in its relation to the house of Godwine, but as carrying forward the gradual consolidation of England itself. How steadily the royal authority had made its way during Eadward's reign was now shown by the accomplishment of what Eadgar and Dunstan had been unable to attempt, the bringing of Northumbria itself frankly into the general system of the realm. Till now Northumbria had held jealously to a partial independence. Siward was a Dane, and he was wedded to a wife who sprang from the blood of the old Northumbrian rulers. Loyal as he was to Eadward, his temper was too fierce to brook interference from the south, nor did royal court or council concern themselves with Siward's earldom. Little of the justice and order which prevailed south of the Humber had as yet made their way to the north of it. It was only by cruelty and violence that Siward held the country together. But, stern as Siward's temper was, he

was of kin to the men he ruled. Tostig, dear as he was to Eadward, and matched though he might be with the daughter of the Flemish count, had nothing to link him with the north. He was neither Dane nor Northumbrian. He was a West-Saxon who came solely in right of his choice by the West-Saxon king and the far-off Witan in the south, and with him came the English rule;[1] under the new earl, king's writs ran to the north of Humber as they ran to the south of it. Nor was Tostig's temper likely to win the love of the Northumbrians. Stern, grave, reserved, he carried a passionate love of justice into this chaos of feuds and outrages. He forced peace upon the land by taking of life and by maiming of limb.[2] Only over his northern border

[1] The very character of the rising against Tostig in later days shows that the Northumbrians now considered themselves fully subjects of the English realm, and bound to appeal for justice to the English king; while the failure of Harald Hardrada to attract their support even against Harold shows at least how much the old sense of northern isolation had been weakened.

[2] Tostig's order was bought by a merciless justice, "patriam purgando talium cruciatu vel nece, et nulli *quantumlibet nobili* parcendo qui in hoc deprehensus esset crimine" (Vita Edw. (Luard), 422). There was nothing wonderful in Northumbria in his having Gamel son of Orm and Ulf son of Dolfin cut down in 1064 "Eboraci in camerâ suâ sub pacis fœdere per insidias" (Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 223). What marked it was the rank of the sufferers. Orm, Gamel's father, had married a daughter of Earl Ealdred and a sister of Siward's wife; and though Gamel was not her son, he was thus of kin to the house of Siward. Englishmen and Danes alike joined in the bitter hostility awakened by Tostig's rule. In the leaders of the rising of 1065, we see among other great nobles, Gamel-bearn, who added to vast estates in Yorkshire a holding

did he carry out the policy of his predecessor. Malcolm, still hard pressed by Macbeth and the Orkney men, was thrown on the friendship of Northumbria; and Tostig, as his "sworn brother," gave him substantial help in the maintenance of his throne.

Ælfgar of East-Anglia.

The death of Siward, the elevation of Tostig, could hardly fail to rouse to a new effort the one house which remained to vie with the house of Godwine. Girt in by Godwine's sons to north and to south, isolated in Mid-Britain, Leofric was too old and sickly to renew single-handed and without help from the king the struggle of 1051. But his

in Staffordshire; Dunstan, the son of Æthelnoth, whose lands may have lain about Pomfret; and Glonieorn, the son of Heardolf. With them also was young Waltheof, Siward's son, and his kinsman, Oswulf, Eadwulf of Bernicia's son, whom the revolution of 1065 was to set for a while in his father's Bernician earldom; Copsige, too, who for a time had been Tostig's deputy in the north, and was under William to seek to become Bernician earl, and to fall by Oswulf's sword; and Siward and Ealdred, descendants of Earl Uhtred by his third wife, Ælfgifu. Also Mærleswegen the shire-reeve, to whom Harold gave the north in hand after the battle of Stamford Bridge, the wealthiest of English proprietors, with great domains in the south-west as far as Cornwall; Archill "potentissimus Northanhymbrorum" (Ord. Vit. (Duchesne), 511 C.), whose vast estates stretched from Yorkshire to Warwick (Ellis, "Domesday," ii. 41); and Gospatric, the later earl of Northumbria, who through his mother Ealdgyth traced his descent to Earl Uhtred and his wife Ælfgifu, the daughter of King Æthelred.

The incidents of the yet later struggle with William the Conqueror throw light on the wild life of the earlier Northumbria. Of the last hero of the north, Earl Waltheof, songs told how head after head of the Frenchmen was shorn off by his sword-stroke as they sallied forth from the gate of York: told of his tall figure, and mighty strength, and sinewy arms, and bull like chest (Will. Malm. "Gest. Reg." (Hardy), i. 427).

son, Ælfgar of East-Anglia, was now practically master of Mid-Britain, and in this emergency seems to have sought aid from his Welsh neighbours in the west. His alliance with Gruffydd of North-Wales marks the establishment of new political relations between England and the Welsh princes. No league of Englishmen with Welshmen with a view of influencing English politics had been seen since Penda's league with Cadwallon. The co-operation of the Welshmen with the Danes had been simply a co-operation of two foes against England itself. But from the time of Ælfgar to the time of Earl Simon of Montfort, the Welsh play a part in English history as allies of English

The Saga of the Scandinavians made him burn 100 Frenchmen in a wood after the fight and give their corpses to the wolves of Northumberland (Saga of Harald Hardrada (Laing), "Sea-kings of Norway," iii. 95). Oswulf, when Copsige dispossesses him, "in fame et egestate sylvis latitans et montibus, tandem collectis quos eadem necessitas compulerat sociis" (Sim. Durh. "Gest. Reg." a. 1072). Churches gave no sanctuary: Copsige takes refuge in one, but "incendio ecclesiæ compellitur usque ad ostium procedere, ubi in ipso ostio manibus Osulfi detruncatur" (*ibid.*). Then a robber kills Oswulf: "cum in obvii sibi latronis lanceam præceps irruerat, illico confossus interiit" (*ibid.*). So in the rising of 1068, "seditiosi silvas, paludes, æstuaria et urbes aliquot in munimentis habent (Ord. Vit. (Duchesne), 511 B.). Plures in tabernaculis morabantur; in domibus, ne mollescerent, requiescere dedignabantur, unde quidam eorum a Normannis silvatici cognominabantur" (*ibid.* C.). When Robert of Comines takes refuge in the bishop's house at Durham, "domum cum inhabitantibus concremaverunt" (Sim. Durh. "Gest. Reg." a. 1069). In the wild country beyond the Tyne the clerks with Cuthbert's body, as they fled to Holy Isle, found a "præpositus Gillo-Michael," a "son of the devil," who robbed them of all he could, sacred as their burthen was. Priests, whether a hundred or ten, were among the slain at Fulford.

combatants. The danger was the greater that Gruffydd had just become master through the death of a rival of the whole of our modern Wales; and we can hardly doubt that it was tidings of a negotiation between earl and prince that drove Harold to a sudden stroke, in the banishment of Ælfgar by the Witan in the spring of 1055.

Power of Harold.

Ælfgar avenged his outlawry by drawing a Danish force from Ireland and joining Gruffydd in a raid on Herefordshire. The rout of Earl Ralf's forces called Harold to the field; but his cool sense preferred peace to a useless victory; and at the close of the year Ælfgar was suffered to return baffled to his earldom and to look on at the further advancement of the house of Godwine. The terms of his restoration were seen on Leofric's death in 1057. Ælfgar was allowed to take his father's earldom, but it was an earldom shorn of many of its older provinces. The earl was girt in on almost every side by the possessions of the rival house Tostig and Harold lay as before to the north and the south of him. His own earldom of East-Anglia was given to Harold's brother Gyrth. The whole line of the Thames was grasped by the two younger sons of Godwine. Gyrth with his outlying earldom of Oxfordshire held its upper waters. Leofwine possessed the shires about its lower course, Essex, Middlesex, Hertford, possibly Buckingham to the north of it, Kent and Surrey to the south. The earldoms of Northamptonshire and Nottingham-

after Freeman. *Walker & Boutall sc.*

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shire, held by Tostig as they had been held by Siward, pressed Ælfgar still closer to the east; while on his western border Harold himself, on the deaths of Odda and of Ralf, took possession of the earldom of the Magesætas and the course of the Severn as a check on the junction of Ælfgar and the Welsh.

Death of the Ætheling.

The aim which Godwine had set before him was all but reached. Only a few shires in the heart of the country had escaped the grasp of his house. And at the moment of this great accession of power fate flung in Harold's way the crown itself. The Ætheling Eadward at last came from Hungary to receive the pledge of his cousin's throne, but he had hardly landed when he died at London. "Rueful was it and harmful to all this folk," sang an English singer, "that he so soon ended his life when he to England came, for mishap to this wretched people." How great a mishap his death was no singer could know. At first it seemed to transmit the succession to his son Eadgar; and young as the boy was, he might find in Harold a guardian stronger and mightier than the elder Eadgar had found in Dunstan, or Æthelred in Æthelwine. But the blow had wakened bolder and less noble thoughts in Harold's breast; and from the Ætheling's death in 1057 we may date the upgrowth of that ambition which was to wreck England in its fall.

Harold throughout his career had found himself

The aim of Harold.

with few of Godwine's difficulties to face, neither the king's ill-will nor the opposition of the court, nor the rivalry of the great earls, nor the violence of Swein. The jealousy of new and advancing greatness which dogged the father's steps hampered the son's progress but little. The court was with him. The land grew accustomed to the power of his house. A few years broke the influence of every rival. The death of Siward, the old age of Leofric, and the exile of his son, left Mercia and Northumberland at his feet. Eadward's growing weakness threw power more and more into his hands, and as the king's end drew near the death of his destined successor bequeathed, as it seemed, the crown to a boy whose age left him naturally under the earl's guardianship. Had Harold been content with power the death of Eadward would have left him as completely master of England as before. But his air of cool reserve and self-command masked an ambition of that meaner sort which craves not only power but the show of power. Harold longed not to be the ruler of England only, but to be its king. During the last years of Eadward's life he was planning a constitutional revolution of the gravest kind, the setting aside a great national tradition, in the transfer of the crown from the house of Cerdic to a house which had sprung only a few years before from utter obscurity. Daring and unscrupulous as such a project was, the power which Godwine had

bequeathed to his son made it possible, had Harold held the threads of Godwine's policy with a hand like Godwine's. But the lower ability of the man was seen in the way in which advantage after advantage was thrown away. At home the union of the house of Godwine itself was broken.[1] His foreign relations snapped one by one. Flanders was lost. The Papacy was lost. Norway was left to prepare an attack unhindered by Swedish intervention. Across the Channel his advance was watched by one even more able and ambitious than himself.[2]

William and England.

William's hopes of the English crown are said to have been revived by a storm which threw Harold, while cruising in the Channel, on the coast of Ponthieu. Its count sold him to the duke; and as the price of return to England William forced him to swear on the relics of saints to support his claim to its throne. But, true or no, the oath told little on Harold's course. As the childless king drew to his grave one obstacle after another was cleared from the earl's path. His brother Tostig had become his most dangerous rival; but a revolt of the Northum-

[1] In Tostig's visit to Nicolas in 1061, and in the remonstrances of the queen alluded to at the king's death ("Frequentius declamasse . . . . tum in frequentibus monitis ipsum regem et reginam," Vit. Edw. (Luard), 432), we may see traces of discord in the house of Godwine.

[2] I have formed the close of this chapter by taking some pages from the "Hist. of the Eng. People," vol. i. p. 111 *et seq.* (A. S. G.)

brians drove Tostig to Flanders, and the earl was able to win over the Mercian house of Leofric to his cause by owning Morkere, the brother of the Mercian earl Eadwine, as his brother's successor. His aim was in fact attained without a struggle. In the opening of 1066 the nobles and bishops who gathered round the death-bed of the Confessor passed quietly from it to the election and coronation of Harold. But at Rouen the news was welcomed with a burst of furious passion, and the duke of Normandy at once prepared to enforce his claim by arms. William did not claim the crown. He claimed simply the right, which he afterwards used when his sword had won it, of presenting himself for election by the nation, and he believed himself entitled so to present himself by the direct commendation of the Confessor. The actual election of Harold which stood in his way, hurried as it was, he did not recognize as valid. But with this constitutional claim was inextricably mingled resentment at the private wrong which Harold had done him, and a resolve to exact vengeance on the man whom he regarded as untrue to his oath. The difficulties in the way of his enterprize were indeed enormous. He could reckon on no support within England itself. At home he had to extort the consent of his own reluctant baronage; to gather a motley host from every quarter of France and to keep it together for months; to create a fleet, to cut down the

very trees, to build, to launch, to man the vessels; and to find time amidst all this for the common business of government, for negotiations with Denmark and the Empire, with France, Brittany, and Anjou, with Flanders and with Rome, which had been estranged from England by archbishop Stigand's acceptance of his pallium from one who was not owned as a canonical Pope.

Stamford Bridge.

But his rival's difficulties were hardly less than his own. Harold was threatened with invasion not only by William but by his brother Tostig, who had taken refuge in Norway and secured the aid of its king, Harald Hardrada. The fleet and army he had gathered lay watching for months along the coast. His one standing force was his body of hus-carls, but their numbers only enabled them to act as the nucleus of an army. On the other hand the land-fyrd, or general levy of fighting-men, was a body easy to raise for any single encounter, but hard to keep together. To assemble such a force was to bring labour to a standstill. The men gathered under the king's standard were the farmers and ploughmen of their fields. The ships were the fishing-vessels of the coast. In September the task of holding them together became impossible, but their dispersion had hardly taken place when the two clouds which had so long been gathering burst at once upon the realm. A change of wind released the landlocked armament of William; but before

Chap. XI. — The Norman Conquest. — 1053-1071.

changing, the wind which prisoned the duke brought the host of Tostig and Harald Hardrada to the coast of Yorkshire. The king hastened with his household troops to the north, and repulsed the Norwegians in a decisive overthrow at Stamford Bridge, but ere he could hurry back to London the Norman host had crossed the sea, and William, who had anchored on the 28th of September off Pevensey, was ravaging the coast to bring his rival to an engagement. His merciless ravages succeeded in drawing Harold from London to the south; but the king wisely refused to attack with the troops he had hastily summoned to his banner. If he was forced to give battle he resolved to give it on ground he had himself chosen, and advancing near enough to the coast to check William's ravages he entrenched himself on a hill, known afterwards as that of Senlac, a low spur of the Sussex Downs near Hastings. His position covered London and drove William to concentrate his forces. With a host subsisting by pillage, to concentrate is to starve; and no alternative was left to the duke but a decisive victory or ruin.

Battle of Hastings.

On the fourteenth of October William led his men at dawn along the higher ground that leads from Hastings to the battle-field which Harold had chosen. From the mound of Telham the Normans saw the host of the English gathered thickly behind a rough trench and a stockade on

the height of Senlac. Marshy ground covered their right; on the left, the most exposed part of the position, the hus-carls or bodyguard of Harold, men in full armour and wielding huge axes, were grouped round the Golden Dragon of Wessex and the Standard of the king. The rest of the ground was covered by thick masses of half-armed rustics who had flocked at Harold's summons to the fight with the stranger. It was against the centre of this formidable position that William arrayed his Norman knighthood, while the mercenary forces he had gathered in France and Brittany were ordered to attack its flanks. A general charge of the Norman foot opened the battle; in front rode the minstrel Taillefer, tossing his sword in the air and catching it again while he chaunted the song of Roland. He was the first of the host who struck a blow, and he was the first to fall. The charge broke vainly on the stout stockade behind which the English warriors plied axe and javelin with fierce cries of "Out, out," and the repulse of the Norman footmen was followed by a repulse of the Norman horse. Again and again the duke rallied and led them to the fatal stockade. All the fury of fight that glowed in his Norseman's blood, all the headlong valour that spurred him over the slopes of Val-ès-dunes, mingled that day with the coolness of head, the dogged perseverance, the inexhaustible faculty of resource which shone at

Mortemer and Varaville. His Breton troops, entangled in the marshy ground on his left, broke in disorder, and as panic spread through the army a cry arose that the duke was slain. William tore off his helmet; "I live," he shouted, "and by God's help I will conquer yet." Maddened by a fresh repulse, the duke spurred right at the Standard; unhorsed, his terrible mace struck down Gyrth, the king's brother; again dismounted, a blow from his hand hurled to the ground an unmannerly rider who would not lend him his steed. Amidst the roar and tumult of the battle he turned the flight he had arrested into the means of victory. Broken as the stockade was by his desperate onset, the shield-wall of the warriors behind it still held the Normans at bay, till William by a feint of flight drew a part of the English force from their post of vantage. Turning on his disorderly pursuers, the duke cut them to pieces, broke through the abandoned line, and made himself master of the central ground. Meanwhile the French and Bretons made good their ascent on either flank. At three the hill seemed won, at six the fight still raged around the Standard where Harold's hus-carls stood stubbornly at bay on a spot marked afterwards by the high altar of Battle Abbey. An order from the duke at last brought his archers to the front. Their arrow-flight told heavily on the dense masses crowded around the king, and as the sun went

down a shaft pierced Harold's right eye. He fell between the royal ensigns, and the battle closed with a desperate melly over his corpse.

Coronation of William.

Night covered the flight of the English army: but William was quick to reap the advantage of his victory. Securing Romney and Dover, he marched by Canterbury upon London. Faction and intrigue were doing his work for him as he advanced; for Harold's brothers had fallen with the king on the field of Senlac, and there was none of the house of Godwine to contest the crown. Of the old royal line there remained but a single boy, Eadgar the Ætheling. He was chosen king; but the choice gave little strength to the national cause. The widow of the Confessor surrendered Winchester to the duke. The bishops gathered at London inclined to submission. The citizens themselves faltered as William, passing by their walls, gave Southwark to the flames. The throne of the boy-king really rested for support on the earls of Mercia and Northumbria, Eadwine and Morkere; and William, crossing the Thames at Wallingford and marching into Hertfordshire, threatened to cut them off from their earldoms. The masterly movement forced the earls to hurry home, and London gave way at once. Eadgar himself was at the head of the deputation who came to offer the crown to the Norman duke. "They bowed to him," says the English annalist, pathetically, "for need." They bowed to the Normans;

they had bowed to the Dane, and William accepted the crown in the spirit of Cnut. London indeed was secured by the erection of a fortress which afterwards grew into the Tower, but William desired to reign not as a conqueror but as a lawful king. At Christmas he received the crown at Westminster from the hands of Archbishop Ealdred amid shouts of "Yea, yea," from his new English subjects. Fines from the greater landowners atoned for a resistance which now counted as rebellion; but with this exception every measure of the new sovereign showed his desire of ruling as a successor of Eadward or Ælfred. As yet indeed the greater part of England remained quietly aloof from him, and he can hardly be said to have been recognized as king by Northumberland or the greater part of Mercia. But to the east of a line which stretched from Norwich to Dorsetshire his rule was unquestioned, and over this portion he ruled as an English king. His soldiers were kept in strict order. No change was made in law or custom. The privileges of London were recognized by a royal writ which still remains, the most venerable of its muniments, among the city's archives. Peace and order were restored. William even attempted, though in vain, to learn the English tongue that he might personally administer justice to the suitors in his court. The kingdom seemed so tranquil that only a few months had passed after the battle of Senlac when,

leaving England in charge of his brother Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and his minister, William Fitz-Osbern, the king returned in 1067 for a while to Normandy. The peace he left was soon indeed disturbed. Bishop Odo's tyranny forced the Kentishmen to seek aid from Count Eustace of Boulogne; while the Welsh princes supported a similar rising against Norman oppression in the west. But as yet the bulk of the land held fairly to the new king. Dover was saved from Eustace; and the discontented fled over sea to seek refuge in lands as far off as Constantinople, where Englishmen from this time formed great part of the bodyguard or Varangians of the eastern emperors. William returned to take his place again as an English king. It was with an English force that he subdued a rising in the south-west with Exeter at its head, and it was at the head of an English army that he completed his work by marching to the North. His march brought Eadwine and Morkere again to submission; a fresh rising ended in the occupation of York, and England as far as the Tees lay quietly at William's feet.

The Norman Conquest.

It was in fact only the national revolt of 1068 that transformed the king into a conqueror. The signal for the revolt came from Swein, king of Denmark, who had for two years past been preparing to dispute England with the Norman, but on the appearance of his fleet in the Humber all

northern, all western and south-western England, rose as one man. Eadgar the Ætheling with a band of exiles who had found refuge in Scotland took the head of the Northumbrian revolt; in the south-west the men of Devon, Somerset, and Dorset gathered to the sieges of Exeter and Montacute; while a new Norman castle at Shrewsbury alone bridled a rising in the west. So ably had the revolt been planned that even William was taken by surprise. The outbreak was heralded by a storm of York and the slaughter of three thousand Normans who formed its garrison. The news of this slaughter reached William as he was hunting in the forest of Dean; and in a wild outburst of wrath he swore "by the splendour of God" to avenge himself on the North. But wrath went hand in hand with the coolest statesmanship. The centre of resistance lay in the Danish fleet, and pushing rapidly to the Humber with a handful of horsemen William bought at a heavy price its inactivity and withdrawal. Then turning westward with the troops that gathered round him he swept the Welsh border and relieved Shrewsbury, while William Fitz-Osbern broke the rising around Exeter. His success set the king free to fulfil his oath of vengeance on the North. After a long delay before the flooded waters of the Aire he entered York and ravaged the whole country as far as the Tees. Town and village were harried and burned, their inhabitants were slain or driven

over the Scottish border. The coast was especially wasted that no hold might remain for future landings of the Danes. Crops, cattle, the very implements of husbandry were so mercilessly destroyed that a famine which followed is said to have swept off more than a hundred thousand victims. Half a century later indeed the land still lay bare of culture and deserted of men for sixty miles northward of York. The work of vengeance once over William led his army back from the Tees to York, and thence to Chester and the west. Never had he shown the grandeur of his character so memorably as in this terrible march. The winter was hard, the roads choked with snowdrifts or broken by torrents, provisions failed; and his army, storm-beaten and forced to devour its horses for food, broke out into mutiny at the order to cross the bleak moorlands that part Yorkshire from the west. The mercenaries from Anjou and Brittany demanded their release from service. William granted their prayer with scorn. On foot, at the head of the troops which still clung to him, he forced his way by paths inaccessible to horses, often helping the men with his own hands to clear the road, and as the army descended upon Chester the resistance of the English died away.

Its completion.

For two years William was able to busy himself in castle-building and in measures for holding down the conquered land. How effective these were was seen when the last act of the conquest

was reached. All hope of Danish aid was now gone, but Englishmen still looked for help to Scotland. where Eadgar the Ætheling had again found refuge, and where his sister Margaret had become wife of King Malcolm. It was probably some assurance of Malcolm's aid which roused the Mercian earls, Eadwine and Morkere, to a fresh rising in 1071. But the revolt was at once foiled by the vigilance of the Conqueror. Eadwine fell in an obscure skirmish, while Morkere found shelter for a while in the fen country where a desperate band of patriots gathered round an outlawed leader, Hereward. Nowhere had William found so stubborn a resistance: but a causeway two miles long was at last driven across the marshes, and the last hopes of English freedom died in the surrender of Ely. It was as the unquestioned master of England that William marched to the north, crossed the Lowlands and the Forth and saw Malcolm appear in his camp upon the Tay to swear fealty at his feet.

(Unfinished Notes on Archbishop Stigand.)

At the head of the English Church, in name at least, stood Stigand of Canterbury. We have seen the political importance of his elevation and the disappointment of the hopes embodied in it; but he represented in its highest form the principle of the house of Godwine, whose chaplain and negotiator he had been, and illustrates the conception of a high Churchman which that house entertained. His beginning had been strangely picturesque. On the site of his great victory at Assandun Cnut reared in 1020 a minster of stone, a rare sight in that country of timber and brick, and set Stigand there as its priest. Mr. Freeman and Mr. St. John assume this Stigand to be "no other than the famous archbishop. Stigand the Priest signs charters of Cnut in 1033 and 1035, and one without date, and one of Harthacnut in 1042 (Cod. Dip. iv. 46, vi. 185; vi. 187; iv. 65). He seems to be the only person of the name who signs." (Freeman, "Norm. Conq." i. 424, note 4.) He remained steadfast to the cause of the Danish house. He was chaplain to Harald Harefoot (Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 193) as he had been to Cnut (Freeman, "Norm. Conq." i. 425), and afterwards the nearest friend and adviser of Cnut's widow (Eng. Chron. (Abingdon), 1043). Although it is said that in 1038 he was nominated to a bishopric, yet he was deposed before consecration for lack of money to outbid his rivals for the office. (The story is only given by Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 193. He signs as bishop in Cod. Dip. 787. For date, see Freeman, "Norm. Conq." ii. 64, note.) At the accession of Eadward, however, and possibly as a part of the price which the

new king paid for his crown, he was named and consecrated to the bishopric of Elmham in the Easter Gemot of 1043. But before the year was over it would seem that some suspicion of political intrigues carried on by him through the Lady Emma had been awakened in men's minds. The seizure of the lands and treasures of Emma into the king's hands by decree of the Gemot was followed by the deposition of Stigand from his seat, and the confiscation of his goods by the counsel of the same Gemot, which doubtless held him guilty of a share in the crimes of Emma. (Eng. Chron. (Abingdon), 1043.) "That Stigand should have supported the claims of Swegen is in itself not improbable. He had risen wholly through the favour of Cnut, his wife, and his sons." (Freeman, "Norm. Conq." ii. 65.) In the following year, however, Stigand had made his peace with Godwine and Eadward, and was again bishop of Elmham (Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 199), and three years later, 1047, rose to the see of Winchester. His services in securing Godwine's reconciliation made him primate in 1052, and from this time till after the Conquest he stood at the head of the English Church. He was not, however, satisfied with the wealth of Canterbury; as he had promoted his brother, Æthelmær, to Elmham when he went to Winchester, so on going to Canterbury he retained his rich see of Winchester—"præterea multas abbatias." (Will. Malm. "Gesta Pontif." (Hamilton), p. 36.) Of the "treasures of gold and silver" which he was said to have carried off even to his prison (Angl. Sac. i. 250), Winchester preserved a big silver cross with two images which were found in his treasury.

But though Stigand might sit at Canterbury, none held him for archbishop. To the Abingdon chronicler in 1053, a year after his elevation, he was still "Stigand bishop," though he "held the bishopric at Canterbury." In the same year bishops Leofwine of

Lichfield and Wulfwig of Dorchester fared over sea for consecration rather than ask for it from him. (Eng. Chron. (Abingdon), 1053.) Robert, deposed by the Witan, fled to tell his tale at Rome: and Leo. IX. was not likely to hold the deposition a valid one, nor seemingly did his successors Victor II. and Stephen IX. For six years Stigand remained an archbishop without a pallium, driven, as the story of his enemies ran, to use the pallium of the Norman Robert whose place he had usurped. At last in 1058 Stigand found means to get his pallium from the anti-pope Benedict. Such a step however really increased his difficulties. It enabled him, indeed, for the first and last time to hallow bishops, Æthelric of Selsey and Siward of Rochester; but it soon made matters worse. Benedict was driven from the Papal see in 1059, and his successors, Nicolas II. and Alexander II., with the deacon Hildebrand behind them, were only forced into a position of hostility which was made the more irreconcileable from the bitter strife in which the Papacy was then engaged with the Emperor. Nor was the answer given by England to such a step on Stigand's part encouraging. So doubtful was his position still held to be, that in May 1060, a year after Benedict was driven out, Harold himself had Waltham hallowed by Archbishop Cynesige. The general drift of feeling too was shown in the journey of Walter the Lotharingian bishop of Hereford, and Gisa of Wells, to Rome itself in April 1061 for consecration from the very Pope, Nicolas, who had been defied by Stigand's act; and by Ealdred, the archbishop of York, also seeking his pallium at Rome in the same year, accompanied by two sons of Godwine, Tostig and Gyrth. In fact the very house of Godwine found itself unable to withstand the force of public feeling. The visit of Tostig and Gyrth to Pope Nicolas in 1061 pointed to a reconciliation with Nicolas; and

as to the feeling of the king, Gisa himself tells us that it was Eadward that sent him to Rome and to Nicolas. ("Romam direxit, et a Nicolao Papa ordinatum . . . honorifice recepit." Hunter, "Eccl. Doc." p. 16.)

But a yet harder blow at Stigand's authority was to follow in the next year, dealt by the hands of Wulfstan. It is possible that the Papal legates who were sent to England in 1062 by the successor of Nicolas, Alexander II., brought a distinct and fresh sentence against Stigand. (Cf. the terms of Wulfstan's profession. Freeman, "Norm. Conq." ii. note cc.) They were received by the archbishop of York, who took them over England, and they were quartered at Worcester in charge of Prior Wulfstan. (Flor. Worc. (Thorpe), i. 220.) Their reception in the realm and in the Gemot at Worcester, and their influence in raising Wulfstan to the see of Worcester (which quite goes with his language about Stigand) secured England for the Papacy and made the archbishop's position untenable. Wulfstan's consecration indeed by Ealdred in September 1062 was the most public and decisive repudiation of Stigand that had been made. The words of his profession (only printed in Freeman, "Norm. Conq." ii. note cc.) are: "Quo tempore ego Wulstanus ad Wigorniensem Wicciorum urbem sum ordinatus episcopus, sanctam Dorobernensem ecclesiam cui omnes antecessores meos constat fuisse subjectos, Stigandus jampridem invaserat, metropolitanum ejusdem sedis vi et *dolo* expulerat, usumque pallii quod ei abstulit contempta apostolicæ sedis auctoritate temerare præsumpserat. *Unde a Romanis Pontificibus Leone, Victore, Stephano, Nicolao, Alexandro, vocatus, excommunicatus, damnatus est.* Ipse tamen ut cœpit, in sui cordis obstinatione permansit. Per idem tempus jussa eorum Pontificum in Anglicam terram delata sunt prohibentium ne quis ei episcopalem reverentiam exhiberet, aut ad eum ordinandus accederet. Quo

tempore Anglorum præsules, alii Romam, nonnulli Franciam sacrandi petebant; quidam vero ad vicinos coepiscopos accedebant. Ego autem Alredum Eboracensis ecclesiæ antistitem adii; professionem tamen de canonicâ obedientiâ usque ad præsentem diem facere distuli." The "perjuriis et homicidiis inquinatus" in Orderic's description of Stigand's deposition (Ord. Vit. (Duchesne) 516 B) may mean the bloodshed, etc., at the Gemot of 1052, but the "perjuriis" must go with the "dolo" of Wulfstan. None would have him. He did not consecrate Westminster. Harold in later days chose Ealdred to hallow him as king. Stigand indeed stood with Harold beside the bed of the dying Eadward; but it was only to hear himself denounced as Eadward predicted the coming woe. "Cognoscebant enim per sacri ordinis personas Christiani cultus religionem maxime violatam, hocque frequentius declamasse tum per legatos et epistolas suas Romanum Papam, tum in frequentibus monitis ipsum regem et reginam: sed divitiis et mundanâ gloriâ irrecuperabiliter quidam diabolo allecti, vitæ adeo neglexerant disciplinam ut non horrerent jam tunc imminentem incidere in Dei iram." Vita Edw. (Luard), 431–432. "Cunctisque stupentibus et terrore agente tacentibus, ipse archiepiscopus qui debuerat vel primus pavere, vel verbum consilii dare, infatuato corde submurmurat in aurem ducis, senio confectum et morbo, quid diceret nescire." Vita Edw. (Luard), 431. The "divitiis" above points to the ground which common rumour assigned for Stigand's obstinacy.

His presence with the earl at the king's bedside only shows that Harold was still driven to cling to him, though he, with all England, held him to possess no spiritual power.

(*I have reprinted from an article written by Mr. Green in the* Saturday Review *for August* 22, 1868, *the following passages, which deal with the character of Harold, and, in the scarcity of materials, furnish some commentary on the text.*—A. S. G.)

"The death of Godwine in the very hour of his triumph bequeathed the direction of English affairs to his son, Earl Harold. It is the special merit of Mr. Freeman's elaborate researches into the later history of Eadward's reign that they bring home to us the fact that the man, who in common narratives starts into rule for a single year by his seizure of the crown, had in reality been the ruler of England for twelve years before. The coronation of Harold was, as he fairly puts it, the natural climax of the life of one who at twenty-four years old 'was invested with the rule of one of the great divisions of England; who seven years later became the virtual ruler of the kingdom; who at last, twenty-one years from his first elevation, received, alone among English kings, the crown of England as the free gift of her people.' The obvious lesson of all this is that Harold can no longer be judged from the single stand-point of Senlac. The year of his great close is simply the last of an administration which extended over thirteen years; and it is the general tenour of that administration, rather than of any isolated events in it, that must really give us the measure of Harold. He came to power, it must be remembered, unfettered by many of the obstacles that had beset his father. The revolution which had restored his house had freed him from the internal rivalry of a foreign party at the court. The defeat

of Macbeth and the elevation of a nominee of England to the Scottish throne removed all danger from the north. If any fears of a Danish reaction still lingered, they must have been removed by the death of Osgod Clapa. Siward and Leofric, the two formidable counterpoises to the power of his house, passed away in the first years of his rule. Godwine had carried with him to his grave a thousand party resentments, gathered along a tortuous course of political intrigue. The one great moral obstacle that stood between England and his family had died with Swein. None of the jealousy which Eadward displayed towards the supremacy of his first minister seems to have displayed itself towards his second. For twelve years he was the undisputed governor of the realm. And this political supremacy was backed by high personal qualities. . . . The character of the Earl, however, remains singularly obscure. The very nature of his administration itself, during the greater part of it, is dark and mysterious. The three last years of it, indeed, are memorable enough—the years of the Welsh campaign, the expulsion of Tostig, the accession to the Crown; but the ten that precede them defy even the industry of Mr. Freeman. . . . With the exception of his doubtful voyage through France, it is notable that throughout the rule of Harold England is without any foreign relations whatever; for the embassy to the Imperial Court in 1054 had a simply domestic purpose, and the nomination of a few Lotharingian bishops does not affect the really insular nature of his policy. Nor is this absence of outer relations compensated by any internal activity. Mr. Freeman marks, indeed, the predominance of ecclesiastical administration as the characteristic of this earlier period of Harold's rule; but when we look closer into the mass of details, there is simply no ecclesiastical administration whatever, no conspicuous synod, no great

Church reform—nothing, in a word, but the appointment of a few prelates in the place of others, the attempted introduction of the rule of Chrodegang, and, so far as Harold himself is concerned, the foundation of a single religious house. . . . In his civil administration, as in his foreign and ecclesiastical, it is difficult to grasp any new or large conception in the mind of Harold, such as those which lift his Norman rival into greatness. Take him at his best, there is little more than a sort of moral conservatism, without a trace of genius or originality, or even any attempt at high statesmanship. Take him at his worst, and we can hardly fail to see a certain cunning and subtlety of temper that often co-exists with mediocrity of intellectual gifts. In the internal government of the realm he simply follows out his father's policy, while avoiding his father's excesses. For one great political scandal he is solely responsible. It may not have been with a deliberate purpose of neutralizing the great constitutional check on an English king that he allowed the highest dignity of the English Church to remain throughout his rule in a state of suspension. But if we acquit him of a purpose which would be a crime, it can only be on the plea of an indifference to the true relations of the State which was even worse than a crime. In all other respects his civil administration during his first ten years of rule is the mere continuation of his father's. There is the same scheme of family aggrandizement, carried out in even a less scrupulous way. To gain the paternal earldom of Wessex, indeed, Harold had been compelled to resign his own lordship of East-Anglia to the rival power of Mercia. But two years after, when he was firm in his saddle and the death of Siward had added the north to the domain of his family, Harold dealt a sharp blow at the one house that held him in check. . . . There are

but four accounts left of the banishment of Earl Ælfgar in 1055, and of these three agree in declaring the earl guiltless, or nearly guiltless. The fourth, which avers that he publicly confessed his guilt, but that the confession escaped him unawares, is 'that of the chronicler who is most distinctly a partisan of Harold's.' . . . Harold was forced, indeed, to consent to his victim's restoration; but when Leofric's death threw his father's earldom into his hands, he wrested back East-Anglia and girded Mercia round with the chain of the possessions of his house. It is impossible, in the absence of facts, to explain the change of policy that followed. It may have been that the house of Leofric, confined now to a few central counties of the realm, was no longer dangerous as a foe, and might be useful as a friend. It may have been that Harold was jealous of the power of Tostig and of his influence with the king. All that we know is that Harold suddenly reversed his whole previous policy, and in spite or in consequence of his brother's feud with the sons of Ælfgar, intermarried with their house. The marriage was quickly followed by the rising of Northumbria against its earl, and the rising was clearly prompted by Mercian instigation. But was the instigation simply Mercian? Harold was now the fast friend of Eadwine and Morkere; the expulsion of Tostig removed the only possible rival to his hopes of the Crown; the division of Northumbria into two earldoms, so evidently stipulated as the price of Morkere's accession, told only to Harold's profit. It is certain that when the two brothers stood face to face the charge was openly made that the revolt had been owing to the machinations of Harold. It is certain that the charge was so vehemently urged and received so much credence, that Harold thought it needful to purge himself legally by oath. Anyhow, in spite of the violent opposition of the king, the

royal minister yielded every point to the insurgents, and his brother fled over sea. It is, we repeat, impossible from sheer dearth of information to disentangle the threads of this complicated web of intrigue and revolution, or to pronounce with any certainty on the character of Harold's course in the matter. If Harold was simply using England as a vast chess-board, and moving friends and foes in an unscrupulous play for power, he was amply punished. The revenge of Tostig proved the ruin of Harold. The victory of Stamford Bridge was the prelude of the defeat of Senlac. . . . Even hero-worship can hardly err in its praises of that final struggle, and the critic who rates Harold lowest may own that there are supreme moments when even the commonplace gather grandeur ere they pass away. But the character of the man and of his rule is to be gathered, not from the hour of heroic struggle, but from the years that preceded it. A policy of mere national stagnation within and without sprang from the natural temper, the poverty of purpose, the narrowness of conception, of a mind which it is impossible to call great."

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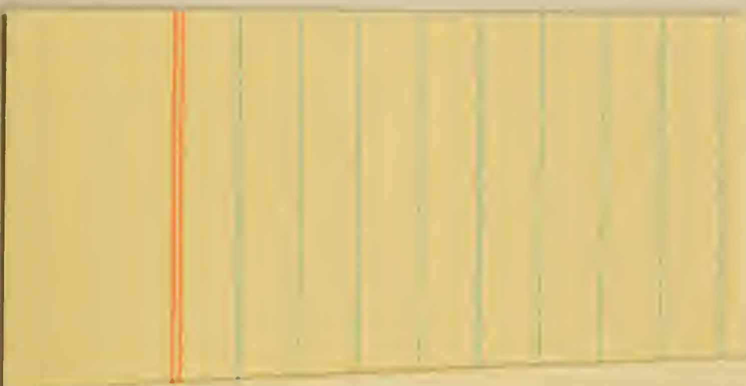

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